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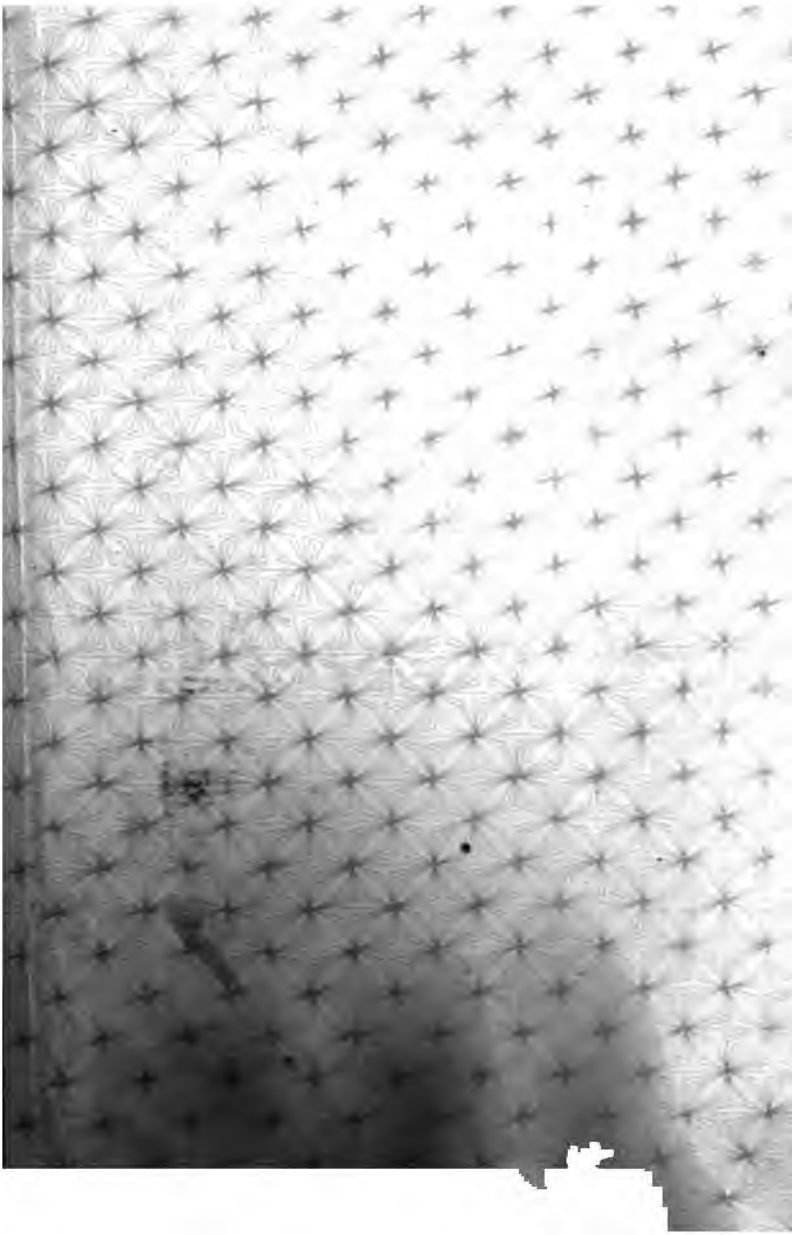

Ostrovsky.

THE NOVELS OF IVAN TURGENEV

ILLUSTRATED EDITION

VIRGIN SOIL

TRANSLATED FROM THE RUSSIAN

By

CONSTANCE GARNETT

VOLUME I

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFOR
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INTRODUCTION

THE last words of *Virgin Soil*—

'A long while Paklin remained standing before this closed door.

"Anonymous Russia!" he said at last'—

lay bare the inner meaning of the book. Anonymous Russia! It was Anonymous Russia, as Turgenev saw, that had at last arisen to menace the doors which shut out Russia from political liberty. And it is of the spontaneous formation of the Nihilist party, and of the hurried and uncertain steps it took preparatory to the serious Terrorist struggle, that *Virgin Soil* treats with equal skill and force. The educated advanced Russian of the seventies had begun to live an underground life: Turgenev studied this phenomenon, and

difficult though this study was, so well did he foresee the future of Young Russia that *Virgin Soil* remains the best analysis made of the national elements that were mingled in its loosely-knit secret organisations. *Virgin Soil* gives us the historical justification of the Nihilist movement, and the prophecy of its surface failure: it traces out the deep roots of the necessity of such a movement; it shows forth the ironical and inevitable weakness of this party of self-sacrifice. This effect is obtained in this novel by a series of significant suggestions underlying the words and actions of the characters.

These suggestions are delicate and fleeting like the quiet swirl of water round the sunken rocks in a stream. And so delicately is the Nihilist rising shadowed forth, that a foreign reader can enjoy the novel simply for its human, and not for its political, interest. Delicate, however, as is the technique of *Virgin Soil* there is a large, free carelessness in the spirit of its art which reminds one much of the few last plays of Shakespeare, notably of *Cymbeline*, where the action, so easy-going is it, is almost too natural and effortless to be called

art. In reality this large carelessness is a sign that the stage of the artist's maturity has been reached, and a little passed. *Virgin Soil* was the last of Turgenev's great novels, and appropriately ends his career as novelist: it was his last word to the young: it was the cause of his final disgrace with the Government, it was his link with most of Russia's great writers: they were exiled in life: Turgenev was exiled after death. A public funeral was forbidden him, no public honour might be shown him, and public comments on his labours were discreetly veiled and discreetly suppressed by the Government, that had feared his power in life. And this fatuous act of the autocracy is the best commentary on the truth of *Virgin Soil.*

To examine the characters of the novel is to see how perfectly representative they are of Russian political life. Nezhdanov, the poet and half-aristocrat, is one of the most important. Turgenev makes him the child of a *mésalliance*, and he is, in fact, the bastard child of Power allied to modern Sentimentality. Born with the brain of an aristocrat, he represents the uneasy educated conscience of the aristocrats, the

conscience which is ever seeking to propitiate, and be responsible for, 'the people,' but is ever driven back by its inability to make itself understood by the masses, which have been crystallised by hard facts, for hundreds of years, into a great caste of their own. Nezhdanov understands instinctively how impossible, how fatal, is the task of 'going to the people': his sympathy is with them, but not of them. Banished, by his attitude, from his own caste, he seeks refuge in poetry and art; but there is not enough of reality, not enough of the national life, in his art for him to feel himself more than a dilettante. He feels he must identify himself with the real movements around him, or perish. He fails in his impossible task of winning over 'the people,' and perishes. The Nezhdanovs still exist in Europe: they are the sign of a dislocation of the national life and of the artificial conditions of the society in which they appear; and the Russian Nezhdanov of the seventies was a type very much in evidence in the Nihilist party, and by making his hero perish Turgenev wished to show that hope for the future lay with far different men—with the Mariannas, the moral enthusiasts, and with

the Solomins, the practical leaders who must come from 'the people' itself.

In drawing Nezhdanov, Turgenev was on his own ground: the type was very sympathetic to him, for he too felt all his life with despair that the gulf, that separated 'the people' from those who would lead them, was too great to be successfully crossed; and his own inner life was a turning away from the politicians, who traduced him and watched him with suspicion, to art as a refuge from reality. But in drawing Solomin, the leader coming from the people, Turgenev did not achieve an artistic success. The truth is, this type was then a scarce one, and to-day it is not prominent. It is this type of man that Russia needs more than any other, the man of firmness and *character*. By temperament Turgenev was antagonistic to it, and accordingly Solomin is a little too doubtful, a little too undetermined, a little too wooden. One cannot see precisely what is in him, and he does not present enough of the rich contradictions and human variations of a living man. True, Solomin typifies the splendid sturdiness of the Russian people, the caution and craftiness of the peasant-born and

the intellectual honesty of his race; but these qualities need a more individual soul behind them to combine them into a great artistic creation. And in fact the Russian Solomins have not yet left the factories: they are the foremen who do not speak up enough for 'the people' in the national life.

Marianna, however, the young girl, the Nihilist enthusiast, is the success of the book. The splendid qualities shown by the Nihilist women in the Terrorist campaign, a few years later than the publication of *Virgin Soil*, are a striking testimony to Turgenev's genius in psychology. The women of Young Russia were waiting to be used, and used the women were. Marianna is the incarnation of that Russian fight for progress, which, though half-hidden and obscure to foreign eyes, has thrilled the nerves of Europe. This pure girl with passionate, courageous soul is, in fact, the Liberty of Russia. Without experience or help, with eyes bandaged by her destiny, she calmly goes forward on the far journey whence there is no return. By necessity she must go on: she lives by faith. In her figure is personified the flower of the Russian youth, those who cast

off from their generation the stigma of inaction —that heart-eating inaction which is the vice of the Russian temperament, as her great writers tell us,—those who cast fear to the Sipyagins and the Kallomyetsevs, to the bureaucrats their enemies, and went forth on that campaign, sublime in its recklessness, fruitful in its consequences to their country, and fatal in its consequences to themselves. Marianna personifies the spirit of self-sacrifice which led her comrades forth against autocracy. The path was closed; behind them was only dishonour and cowardice; onward, then, for honour, for liberty, for all that makes life worth living to the courageous in heart. But the closed doors, the doors on which they knocked, were the doors of the fortress: the fortress closed upon them, upon their brothers and sisters: their leaders were sentenced, deported, exiled: fresh leaders sprang up, each circle had its leaders, whose average life, as free men, was reckoned not by years but by months. The lives of Marianna and her generation were spent in prison or in exile. But by the very recklessness of their protest against autocracy, by their very simplicity in 'going to the people,'

by their self-immolation for their principles, Europe knew that there was no liberty in Russia save in its prisons, and that the bloody reprisals that followed were those of Marianna's brothers, who saw her helpless in the hands of a great gendarmerie—a gendarmerie that had long shamelessly abused the power it held, that had silenced brutally all who had protested, all, all the independent spirits, all their great writers, all their *men*. Marianna, Marianna herself must seek the prison. Turgenev foresaw this, and *Virgin Soil* tells of her preparation for the ordeal, of the why and the wherefore she went on her path.

And if anything remains obscure in *Virgin Soil*, the English reader must remember that Turgenev was writing under special difficulties There must always be a little vagueness in one's speech, when *Silence* is written in an official writing above the doors. Anonymous Russia! Anonymous Russia had arisen to mine the doors: the doors must be shattered by secret hands that Europe might for once gaze through. It was for a transgression of this perpetual *Silence* that the crowd was forbidden to speak, when Turgenev was carried

to his tomb. It was for Marianna's transgression of this *Silence* that Turgenev has glorified her in *Virgin Soil*.

II

What was the Nihilist party of the seventies? It began, as we have said, with the Socialistic movement of 'going to the people.' This movement, again, was the natural outlet for the many liberal ideas which, germinating in 'advanced' heads, had been gathering in intensity with each generation. With the liberation of the serfs Alexander II.'s liberal policy had abruptly ended. To understand Russian politics is to know that though there are many cliques there are only two great parties, the one orthodox, the other unorthodox—the party of Governmental Action, and the party of Liberal Ideas. There are no safe politics in Russia outside the official world. If you can win over the officials to your plans in various local work, well and good; if not, your efforts are labelled 'subversive'; and it is thus that sooner or later every disciple of liberal ideas finds himself placed in direct opposition to the Government. Though there

are many liberal-minded men among the officials, still, in Solomin's words, 'the official is always an outsider,' and therefore it is that the unofficial thinking part of Russia, the writers, the professors, the students, the press, and the more intelligent of the professional world, form an unorganised but permanent opposition. To this party gravitate naturally the discontented spirits from all classes—nobles, military men, those who have been hardly dealt with, and those who have an axe of their own to grind, the Markelovs, and the Paklins. Accordingly, the autocracy, by the solid, impermeable front it has presented for twenty-five years to reform and to the education of the peasants, may be said to hold the varying opposition together. The action of the Government, too, in forbidding the public to comment on such matters as the late strike of factory hands in St. Petersburg, where also the masters were 'forbidden to yield to the men's demands, constantly creates a hostile public. And it was in this manner that the Nihilist party of the seventies was formed.

It was natural enough for the last generation

of Young Russia 'to go to the people,' for it is in the matter of the education of the peasants that Russia's hope of social and political reform lies. Besides, this plan of action meant for Young Russia the taking of the path of least resistance. The other paths had been closed by reactionary decrees. But to go actually among the peasantry and work for them and learn from them had never been attempted, and by a natural impulse the Young Russian theorists threw themselves into this Utopian campaign. The movement, of course, was foredoomed. Not only did the Government enact harsh penalties against the Socialists, but the peasants themselves were too ignorant, too far off in their life, to understand what Young Russia meant. And the exiling and imprisonment of the leading propagandists, when it came, could not fail to bring the Nihilists into a direct war with autocracy itself.

The whole quarrel between the autocracy and the liberal opposition, a quarrel which the Nihilists of the late seventies brought to a head, is a question of liberty. Is Russia to be more Orientalised or more Europeanised? If

you believe in liberty of speech and of the conscience, in a free press and the education of the peasants, if you would reform the peculation and corruption of the official world, if you wish to circulate European literature without hindrance, if you detest the persecution of the Jews and the Stundists,—then you must keep silent, or be prepared at any moment for bureaucratic warnings, deprivations, detentions, and possible exile. If you are a Slavophil you will acquiesce in every possible action of the bureaucracy, as 'necessary.' It is simply a struggle between a very strongly organised bureaucracy, armed with the modern weapons of centralised power, and the public opinion of a large body of educated subjects with advanced views. Though enormous power is in the hands of the Government, and the gross credulity and ignorance of the peasants, and the self-interest of the officials, all work to preserve the *status quo*, nevertheless there is in the Russian mind, side by side with its natural Slavophilism, a great susceptibility to European example, and therefore the work of the Nihilists of yesterday and the liberals of to-day was, and is, *to awaken the public mind.* It does not matter very much

how this work is performed, so long as it is performed. The Russian mind is naturally quick and sensitive; it moves quickly to conclusions when once it is started, as we see in the quickness with which Russia was semi-Europeanised by Peter the Great, and how easily the Emancipation of the Serfs was effected owing to the weakness of the autocracy at the close of the Crimean war. There is reaction now in Russia, but this may be broken up by the pressure of a series of fresh economic difficulties superimposed upon the old.

It can only, therefore, be claimed for the Nihilists of the seventies that they represented an advanced section of the community, and not the nation itself, in their struggle with the bureaucracy. They must be regarded as enthusiasts who awoke public opinion when it had begun to slumber. They vindicated the manliness of the nation, which had always gone in fear of the official world: it was now the bureaucracy that was afraid! The Nihilists became martyrs for their creed of progress; they drew the attention of Europe to the strange spectacle that Russia presents in its

well-equipped bureaucracy of caste slowly paralysing the old democratic institutions of the peasantry. A strong Governmental system is absolutely necessary for the holding together of the enormous Russian Empire; but the fact that the work of freeing and educating the peasants has (with only the rarest exceptions) been always violently or secretly opposed by the high officials, suggests that the bureaucracy is like a parasite which strangles, though appearing to protect, the tree itself. And the attitude of the official world to its sun and centre, the autocracy, is something like that of threatening soldiers surrounding the throne of a latter-day Cæsarism.

Whether or no the Nihilists' belief in revolution in Russia was justified by their measure of success, their rising was but a long-threatened revolt of idealism and of the Russian conscience against Russian cowardice; it was the fermentation of modern ideas in the breast of a society iron-bound by officialism; it was the generous aspiration of the Russian soul against sloth and apathy and greed. The Nihilists failed, inasmuch as the battle of Liberty is yet to be won: they succeeded,

inasmuch as their revolt was a tremendous object-lesson to Europe of the internal evils of their country. And the objection that they borrowed their ideas of revolution from the Commune, and were not a genuine product of Russia, Turgenev has answered once for all in *Virgin Soil.* Liberty must spring from the soil whence Marianna springs.

In the words of that great poem of Whitman:

The battle rages with many a loud alarm and frequent advance and retreat,
The infidel triumphs, or supposes he triumphs,
The prison, scaffold, garotte, handcuffs, iron necklace, and lead balls do their work,
The named and unnamed heroes pass to other spheres,
The great speakers and writers are exiled, they lie sick in distant lands,
The cause is asleep, the strongest throats are choked with their own blood.
The young men droop their eyelashes towards the ground when they meet.
But for all this Liberty has not gone out of the place, nor the infidel entered into full possession.

When Liberty goes out of a place it is not the first to go, nor the second or third to go,
It waits for all the rest to go, it is the last.'

There is no going back for the Mariannas of Russia. They must go forward, and to-day they are going forward. Honour to them and theirs, to them who, if forbidden by authority to work in the light, are ready again to work in the dark. Honour to that great party with whom their country's liberties have remained—Anonymous Russia!

EDWARD GARNETT.

July 1896.

THE NAMES OF THE CHARACTERS IN THE BOOK

ALEXÉY (AL-YÓSHA) DMÍTRITCH NEZHDÁNOV.
SÍLA SAMSÓNITCH PÁKLIN.
BORÍS ANDRÉ-ITCH SIP-YÁGIN.
SEM-YÓN PETRÓVITCH KALLOM-YÉTSEV.
VALENTÍNA MIHÁLOVNA.
MARIÁNNA VIKÉNT-YEVNA SINÉTSKY.
ÁNNA ZAHÁROVNA.
SERGÉI MIHÁLITCH MARKÉLOV.
VASSÍLY FEDÓTITCH SOLÓMIN.
MASHÚRINA.
OSTRODÚMOV.
GOLÚSHKIN.
VLADÍMIR SÍLIN.
TAT-YÁNA ÓSIPOVNA.
PÁVEL YEGÓRITCH.
FÍMUSHKA.
FÓMUSHKA.
SNANDÚLIYA (SNAPÓTCHKA).

In transcribing the Russian names into English—

a has the sound of *a* in *father*.
e „ „ *a* in *pane*.
i „ „ *ee*.
u „ „ *oo*.
y is always consonantal except when it is the last letter of the word.
g is always hard.

PART I

'*Virgin Soil should be turned up not by a harrow skimming over the surface, but by a plough biting deep into the earth.*'—From the Note-book of a Farmer.

I

AT one o'clock on a spring day of 1868, in Petersburg, a man of twenty-seven, carelessly and shabbily dressed, was mounting the back stairs of a five-storied house in Officers' Street. Tramping heavily with his over-shoes trodden down at heel, and slowly rolling his bulky, ungainly person as he moved, this man at last reached the very top of the stairs. He stopped before a half-open door, hanging off its hinges, and without ringing the bell, merely giving a noisy sigh, he swung into a small anteroom.

'Is Nezhdanov at home?' he called in a deep and loud voice.

'He's not—I'm here, come in,' came from the next room another voice, a woman's, also rather gruff.

'Mashurina?' queried the new-comer.

'Yes, it's me. And you—Ostrodumov?'

'Pimen Ostrodumov,' he answered, and first carefully pulling off his rubber over-shoes, and then hanging his threadbare little old cloak on

a nail, he went into the room from which the woman's voice had come.

This room, low-pitched and dirty, with its walls coloured a dingy green, was dimly lighted by two dusty windows. The only furniture in it was a small iron bedstead in the corner, a table in the middle, a few chairs, and a book-case crammed with books. Near the table was sitting a woman of thirty, bareheaded, in a black woollen gown, smoking a cigarette. When she saw Ostrodumov come in, she held out her broad red hand to him without speaking. He shook it, also without speaking, and, sinking into a chair, he pulled a half-smoked cigar out of his side pocket. Mashurina gave him a light, he began smoking, and without saying a word, or even exchanging glances, they both set to puffing rings of bluish smoke into the close air, which was already saturated with tobacco fumes.

These two people had something in common, though in features they were not alike. About their slovenly figures, with coarse lips, and teeth, and noses (Ostrodumov was marked with small-pox too), there was an air of honesty and stoicism and industry.

'Have you seen Nezhdanov?' Ostrodumov inquired at last.

'Yes; he'll be here directly. He's gone to the library with the books.'

Ostrodumov turned aside and spat.

'How is it he's for ever gadding about now? There's no finding him.'

Mashurina took out another cigarette.

'He's bored,' she pronounced, carefully lighting it.

'Bored!' repeated Ostrodumov reproachfully. 'What self-indulgence! One would think we'd no work for him to do. Here are we praying we may get through all the work decently somehow, and he's bored!'

'Any letter come from Moscow?' inquired Mashurina, after a brief pause.

'Yes . . . the day before yesterday.'

'Have you read it?'

Ostrodumov merely nodded.

'Well . . . what's the news?

'Oh—some one will have to go there soon.'

Mashurina took the cigarette out of her mouth.

'Why so? Everything's all right there, I'm told.'

'Yes, it's all right. Only one man's shown he's not to be depended on. So that . . . we must shift him, or else get rid of him altogether. Oh, and there are other things. They ask for you, too.'

'In the letter?'

'Yes.'

Mashurina shook back her heavy hair. Twisted up carelessly into a small knot behind, it fell in front over her forehead and eyebrows.

'Ah, well,' she declared; 'since the order's given, it's no use discussing it!'

'Of course not. Only it can't be done without money; and where are we to get the money?'

Mashurina pondered. 'Nezhdanov will have to produce it,' she said in an undertone, as though to herself.

'That's the very thing I've come about,' observed Ostrodumov.

'Have you got the letter with you?' Mashurina asked suddenly.

'Yes. Would you like to read it?'

'Yes, give it me . . . no, you needn't, though. We'll read it together . . . afterwards.'

'I tell the truth,' muttered Ostrodumov; 'you needn't doubt it.'

'Well, I don't doubt it.'

And both sank into silence again; and as before, only the rings of smoke floated from their silent lips, and coiling feebly rose above their dishevelled heads.

The thud of over-shoes was heard in the anteroom.

'Here he is!' whispered Mashurina.

The door was opened slightly, and in the crack was thrust a head—but not the head of Nezhdanov.

It was a little round head with rough black hair, a broad, wrinkled forehead, very keen, little brown eyes under bushy eyebrows, a nose pointing in the air like a duck's, and a tiny, rosy, comical mouth. This head took a look round, nodded, smiled—showing a number of tiny white teeth—and came into the room, accompanied by its rickety little body, short arms, and somewhat bandy and lame little legs. Directly Mashurina and Ostrodumov caught sight of this head, the faces of both expressed a sort of condescending contempt, as though each of them were inwardly saying, 'Oh! it's only he!' and they did not utter a single word, did not stir a muscle. However, the reception accorded him not only failed to embarrass the visitor, but apparently afforded him positive gratification.

'What's the meaning of this?' he said in a squeaky voice. 'A duet? Why not a trio? And where's the first tenor?'

'Do you mean to inquire after Nezhdanov, Mr. Paklin?' replied Ostrodumov with a serious face.

'Precisely so, Mr. Ostrodumov; I mean him.'

'He'll be here directly, most likely, Mr. Paklin.'

'It's very delightful to hear that, Mr. Ostrodumov.'

The little cripple turned to Mashurina. She sat scowling, and went on deliberately puffing at her cigarette.

'How are you, dear . . . dear . . . There, how annoying! I always forget your name and your father's.'

Mashurina shrugged her shoulders.

'And there's no need whatever to know them! You know my surname. What more do you want? And what a question: how are you! Can't you see I'm alive all right?'

'True, most true!' cried Paklin, his nostrils dilating and his eyebrows twitching; 'if you weren't alive, your humble servant would not have the pleasure of seeing you here and talking to you! Put my question down to a bad old-fashioned habit. But as for your name and your father's . . . You know it's rather awkward to say baldly, Mashurina! I'm aware, it's true, that you even sign your letters so: Bonaparte!—that's to say, Mashurina! But still, in conversation——'

'But who asks you to talk to me?'

Paklin laughed nervously, as though he were choking.

'There, that's enough, my dear creature—shake hands, don't be cross; don't I know

you've the best heart in the world? and I've a good heart, too . . . Eh?'

Paklin held out his hand. . . . Mashurina looked at him darkly. She shook hands with him, however.

'If you positively must know my name,' she said, with the same gloomy face, 'by all means; my name's Fekla.'

'And mine, Pimen,' Ostrodumov added in his bass.

'Ah! that's very . . . very instructive! But that being so, tell me, O Fekla! and you, O Pimen! tell me why you behave with such unfriendliness, such persistent unfriendliness, to me, while I——'

'Mashurina thinks,' Ostrodumov interrupted, 'and she's not the only one who thinks it, that as you look at every subject from the ridiculous side, there's no relying upon you.'

Paklin turned sharply round on his heels.

'There she—that's the mistake people are continually making in criticising me, most honoured Pimen! In the first place, I'm not always laughing; and secondly, that would not in the least prevent your being able to rely upon me, which is proved, indeed, by the flattering confidence I've more than once enjoyed in your ranks! I'm an honest man, most reverend Pimen!'

Ostrodumov muttered something between his

teeth, while Paklin shook his head and repeated, now without the faintest trace of a smile, 'No! I'm not always laughing! I'm anything but a light-hearted person! You need only look at me!'

Ostrodumov did look at him. And, in fact, when Paklin was not laughing, when he was silent, his face wore an expression almost of dejection, almost of terror; it became humorous and even malicious directly he opened his mouth. Ostrodumov said nothing, however.

Paklin again turned to Mashurina.

'Well, and how are your studies progressing? Are you successful in your truly philanthropic art? I should guess it's a difficult job helping the inexperienced citizen on his first entrance into the light of day?'

'No, not at all difficult, so long as he's not much bigger than you,' answered Mashurina, who had just taken her diploma as a midwife; and she smiled complacently. A year and a half before, she had left her own people, a family of poor nobles in South Russia, and had come to Petersburg with six roubles in her pocket; she had entered a lying-in institution, and by unceasing hard work had gained the coveted diploma. She was a single woman . . . and a very chaste single woman. Nothing wonderful in that, some sceptic will say, remem-

bering what has been said of her exterior. Something wonderful and rare, let us be permitted to say.

Paklin laughed again when he heard her retort.

'You're a smart person, my dear!' he cried. 'You had me there nicely! I deserve it. Why did I stay such a shrimp! But what can have become of our host?'

Paklin purposely changed the subject. He had never been able to resign himself to his diminutive stature and his unsightly little person altogether. He felt it the more keenly as he was a passionate admirer of women. What would he not have given to attract them! The consciousness of his pitiful exterior was a much sorer wound to him than his humble origin, or his unenviable position in society. Paklin's father had been simply a tradesman, who, through shifty dodges of one sort and another, had risen to the rank of titular councillor. He had been a successful go-between in legal business, and a speculator and agent for houses and property. He had made a respectable fortune; but drank heavily towards the end of his life, and left nothing at his death. Young Paklin (he had been named Sila Samsonitch, that is, Strength, son of Samson, which he also regarded as a jeer at his expense) had been educated at a

commercial school, where he learned German thoroughly. After various rather disagreeable experiences, he got at last into a private business house for a salary of about a hundred and fifty pounds a year. On that sum he kept himself, a sick aunt, and a humpbacked sister. At the time of our story he was just twenty-eight. Paklin was acquainted with a number of students, young men who liked him for his cynical wit, the light-hearted venom of his audacious talk, and his one-sided but genuine and unpedantic learning. Only occasionally he suffered at their hands. One day he was somehow late at a political gathering. . . . As he came in, he began at once hurriedly making excuses. . . .

'Poor Paklin was afeared!' sang out some one in a corner, and they all roared with laughter. Paklin at last laughed himself, though his heart was sore. 'He spoke the truth, the ruffian!' he thought to himself. He made Nezhdanov's acquaintance at a Greek eating-house, where he used to go and dine, and where he constantly expressed very free and bold opinions. He used to declare that the chief cause of his democratic frame of mind was the execrable Greek cookery, which upset his liver.

'Yes . . . really . . . what has become of our host?' repeated Paklin. 'I've noticed for

some time past he's seemed out of spirits. Can he be in love?—Heaven forfend!'

Mashurina scowled.

'He's gone to the library for some books; he's no time to be in love and no one to be in love with.'

'How about you?' almost broke from Paklin's lips. 'I want to see him,' he uttered aloud, 'because I have to talk to him about an important affair.'

'What sort of affair?' put in Ostrodumov. 'Our affairs?'

'Perhaps yours . . . that is, our common affairs.'

Ostrodumov hummed. In his heart he was doubtful, but then he reflected, 'Who can tell? He's such a slippery eel!'

'Here he comes at last,' said Mashurina suddenly, and in her small unlovely eyes, that were fastened on the door of the anteroom, there was a flash of something warm and tender, a kind of deep inward spot of light. . . .

The door opened, and this time there entered a young man of three-and-twenty, a cap on his head and a bundle of books under his arm—Nezhdanov himself.

II

AT the sight of visitors in his room, he stopped short in the doorway, took them all in in a glance, flung off his cap, dropped the books straight on to the floor, and without a word went up to the bed and sat down on the edge of it. His handsome white face, which looked still whiter from the deep red of his wavy chestnut hair, expressed dissatisfaction and annoyance.

Mashurina turned slightly away, biting her lip; Ostrodumov growled: 'At last!'

Paklin was the first to approach Nezhdanov.

'What's wrong with you, Alexey Dmitrievitch, Hamlet of Russia? Has any one offended you? or is it a causeless melancholy?'

'Stop that, please, Mephistopheles of Russia,' answered Nezhdanov irritably. 'I'm not equal to a contest with you in dull smartness.'

Paklin laughed.

'You don't express yourself very accurately; if it's smart, it's not dull; if it's dull, it's not smart.'

'Very well, very well. . . . You're a witty fellow, we all know.'

'And you're in a highly nervous condition,' Paklin drawled; 'or has something really happened?'

'Nothing has happened in special; but what's happened is that one can't set one's foot into the street in this filthy town, in Petersburg, without coming across some meanness, idiocy, hideous injustice, rottenness! Life here's impossible any longer.'

'So that's why you've advertised in the paper for a place as tutor and are ready to go away,' Ostrodumov growled again.

'I should think so; I shall get away from here with all the pleasure in life! If only some fool can be found to give me a situation!'

'You must first do your duty *here*,' said Mashurina significantly, still looking away.

'And that is?' queried Nezhdanov, turning sharply round to her.

Mashurina pressed her lips tightly together. 'Ostrodumov will tell you.'

Nezhdanov turned to Ostrodumov. But the latter only cleared his throat and grunted: 'Wait a bit.'

'No, joking apart now, really,' interposed Paklin; 'you have heard something's gone wrong?'

Nezhdanov bounded up on the bed, as though some force were tossing him upwards.

'What more would you have going wrong? he shouted, his voice suddenly growing loud. 'Half Russia's dying of hunger. The *Moscow Gazette*'s triumphant; they're going to introduce classicism; the students' benefit clubs are prohibited; everywhere there's spying, persecution, betrayal, lying, and treachery—we can't advance a step in any direction . . . and all that's not enough for him—he looks for something fresh to go wrong, he thinks I'm joking. . . . Basanov's arrested,' he added, dropping his voice a little; 'they told me at the library.'

Ostrodumov and Mashurina both at once raised their heads.

'My dear fellow, Alexey Dmitrievitch,' began Paklin, 'you are excited—no wonder. . . . But had you forgotten what an age and what a country we live in? Why, among us a drowning man has to make for himself the very straw he's to clutch at! What's the good of being sentimental over it? One must face the worst, my dear fellow, and not fly into a rage, like a baby——'

'Ah, don't, please!' Nezhdanov interrupted fretfully, and his face worked as if he were in pain. 'You, we all know, are a man of energy, you're afraid of nothing and nobody——'

'Me afraid of nobody——!' Paklin was beginning.

'Who could have betrayed Basanov?' Nezhdanov went on. 'I don't understand it!'

'Why, to be sure, a friend. They're grand hands at that—friends are. You must be on the look-out with them! I, for instance, had a friend, and a capital fellow he seemed; thougnt such a lot of me, of my reputation! One day he came to me. . . . "Fancy!" he cried, "the ridiculous slanders they've been spreading about you; they declare you poisoned your own uncle; that you were introduced into some house, and at once took a seat with your back to the lady of the house, and persisted in sitting so the whole evening! And that she fairly cried, yes, cried at the insult! What absurdity! what inanity! what fools can believe such a story?" And what followed? Why, a year later I quarrelled with that very friend. . . . And he writes in a letter of farewell: "You who killed your own uncle! You who were not ashamed to insult a respectable lady by sitting with your back to her! . . ." and so on, and so on. That's what friends are!'

Ostrodumov exchanged glances with Mashurina. 'Alexey Dmitrievitch!' he blurted in his heavy bass—he obviously wanted to cut short the useless eruption of words that was begin-

ning—'a letter has come from Vassily Nikolaevitch from Moscow.'

Nezhdanov gave a slight start and looked down.

'What does he write?' he asked at last.

'Well . . . they want me and her'—Ostrodumov indicated Mashurina—'to go.'

'What? they ask for her too?'

'Yes.'

'Well, where's the difficulty?'

'Why, of course the difficulty's—money.'

Nezhdanov got up from the bed and went up to the window.

'Is a great deal wanted?'

'Fifty roubles . . . can't do with less.'

Nezhdanov was silent for a space.

'I haven't got it now,' he muttered at last, drumming on the pane with his finger-tips; 'but . . . I could get it. I will get it. Have you the letter?'

'The letter? It . . that's to say . . . of course.'

'But why do you always keep things back from me?' cried Paklin. 'Haven't I deserved your confidence? Even if I didn't fully sympathise . . . with what you are undertaking, could you suppose me capable of turning traitor or chattering?'

'Unintentionally . . . perhaps!' Ostrodumov said in his deep notes.

'Neither intentionally nor unintentionally. There's Madame Mashurina looking at me with a smile . . . but I say——'

'I'm not smiling,' snapped Mashurina.

'But I say,' pursued Paklin, 'that you, gentlemen, have no intuition; that you don't know how to distinguish who are your real friends! If a man laughs, you think he's not serious . . .'

'To be sure!' Mashurina snapped again.

'Here, for instance,' Paklin hurried on with renewed vigour, this time not even replying to Mashurina, 'you are in want of money . . . and Nezhdanov hasn't it at the moment . . . well, I can let you have it.'

Nezhdanov turned quickly round from the window.

'No . . . no, . . . what for? I will get it . . . I will draw part of my allowance in advance. . . . They do owe me something, if I remember. But, I say, Ostrodumov; show the letter.'

Ostrodumov first remained for some time motionless; then he looked round, then he stood up, bent right down, and, tucking up his trouser, pulled out of the leg of his high boot a carefully folded ball of blue paper; having pulled this ball out, he, for some unknown reason, blew on it and gave it to Nezhdanov.

The latter took the paper, unfolded it, read

it attentively, and handed it to Mashurina. . . . She first got up from her chair, then she too read it, and returned it to Nezhdanov, though Paklin was holding out his hand for it. Nezhdanov shrugged his shoulders and passed the mysterious letter to Paklin. Paklin, in his turn, ran his eyes over it, and, compressing his lips with great significance, he laid it in solemn silence on the table. Then Ostrodumov took it, lighted a large match, which diffused a strong smell of brimstone, and first raising the paper high above his head, as though he would show it to all present, he burned it up completely in the match, not sparing his fingers, and flung the ashes into the stove. No one uttered a single word, no one even moved, during this operation. The eyes of all were cast down. Ostrodumov had a concentrated and business-like air. Nezhdanov's face looked wrathful; there were signs in Paklin of being ill at ease; Mashurina might have been at a solemn mass.

So passed two minutes. . . . Then a slight awkwardness came over all of them. Paklin first felt the necessity of breaking the silence.

'Well, then,' he began, 'is my sacrifice on the altar of the fatherland accepted, or not? Am I permitted to contribute, if not fifty roubles, at least twenty-five or thirty, to the common cause?'

Nezhdanov all at once flew into a perfect fury. His irritability had been growing, it seemed. . . . The solemn burning of the letter had by no means allayed it; it was only waiting for an excuse to break out.

'I have told you already that it's not wanted, not wanted . . . not wanted! I won't allow it and I won't accept it. I'll get the money, I'll get it directly. I don't need help from anyone!'

'All right, my dear fellow,' observed Paklin. 'I see, though you are a revolutionist, you're not a democrat!'

'Say at once that I'm an aristocrat!'

'Well, you are an aristocrat, really . . . to a certain degree.'

Nezhdanov gave a forced laugh.

'So you mean to hint at my being an illegitimate son. You needn't trouble, my kind friend. . . . Without your aid, I'm not likely to forget that.'

Paklin flung up his arms in despair.

'Alyosha, upon my word, what is the matter with you? How could you take my words like that! I don't know you to-day.' Nezhdanov made an impatient gesture of the head and shoulders. 'Basanov's arrest has upset you, but, you know, he used to behave so imprudently——'

'He used not to conceal his convictions,' Mashurina put in gloomily: 'it's not for us to find fault with him!'

'Of course; only he ought to have thought of others too, who may be compromised by him now.'

'Why do you suppose that of him?' . . . Ostrodumov boomed in his turn: 'Basanov's a man of strong will; he will never betray any one. As for prudence . . . let me tell you, we're not all equally able to be prudent, Mr. Paklin!'

Paklin was offended, and was about to retort, but Nezhdanov stopped him.

'Gentlemen,' he cried, 'be so good as to let politics alone for a time, please!'

A silence followed.

'I met Skoropihin to-day,' Paklin began at last, 'our great national critic and æsthetic enthusiast. What an intolerable creature! He's for ever boiling over and frothing, for all the world like a bottle of bad sour kvas. . . . The waiter, as he runs, holds it down with his finger instead of a cork, a fat raisin sticks in the neck—it goes on bubbling and hissing—and when once all the foam's flown out of it, all that's left at the bottom is a few drops of villainous sour stuff, which quenches no one's thirst, but only gives one a stomach-ache! . . .

A most pernicious individual for young people to have to do with!'

The comparison Paklin had made, though true and apt, called up no smile on any one's face. Only Ostrodumov observed that young people who were capable of taking an interest in æsthetic criticism deserved no pity, even if Skoropihin did lead them astray.

'But really, one moment,' Paklin exclaimed with warmth—the less sympathy he met with, the hotter he got,—'here we have a question, not political we admit, but important for all that. To listen to Skoropihin, every ancient work of art is no good, for the very reason that it is ancient. . . . If that's so, art is nothing but a fashion, and it's not worth while to talk seriously about it! If there is nothing stable, eternal in it—then away with it! In science, in mathematics, for instance, you don't regard Euler, Laplace, Hauss as antiquated imbeciles, do you? Are you prepared to reckon them as authorities, while Raphael and Mozart are fools? Does your pride revolt against their authority? The canons of art are more difficult to arrive at, than the laws of science . . . agreed; but they exist, and any one who doesn't see them, is blind; whether wilfully or not, makes no difference!'

Paklin ceased . . . and no one uttered a

sound, as though all of them were holding water in their mouths, as though all were a little ashamed of him. Only Ostrodumov growled: 'And, all the same, I don't feel the least sorry for young men who are led astray by Skoropihin.'

'Oh, go to the devil with you!' thought Paklin. 'I'm off!'

He had come to see Nezhdanov with the object of communicating to him his views as to procuring the *Polar Star* from abroad (the *Bell* had already ceased to exist), but the conversation had taken such a turn, that it seemed better not even to raise this question. Paklin was already reaching after his hat, when suddenly, without any premonitory noise or knocking, there was heard in the anteroom a marvellously pleasant, manly, and mellow baritone, the very sound of which had somehow a suggestion of exceptional good breeding, good education, and even good perfume.

'Is Mr. Nezhdanov at home?'

They all looked at one another in amazement.

'Mr. Nezhdanov at home?' repeated the baritone.

'Yes,' answered Nezhdanov at last.

The door was opened discreetly and smoothly, and slowly removing his glossy hat from his

comely short-cropped head, a man of about forty, tall, well-made, and dignified, came into the room. He was dressed in a very handsome cloth coat, with a superb beaver collar, though the month of April was drawing to its close. He struck all, Nezhdanov, Paklin, even Mashurina . . . even Ostrodumov! by the elegant self-possession of his carriage and the cordial ease of his address. They all instinctively rose on his entrance.

III

THE elegantly dressed man advanced to Nezhdanov, and, smiling benevolently, began: 'I have already had the pleasure of meeting you and even having some conversation with you, Mr. Nezhdanov, the day before yesterday, if you remember, at the theatre.' The visitor paused, as though waiting for something. Nezhdanov bent his head slightly, and flushed. 'Yes. . . . I have come to see you to-day in consequence of the advertisement you have put in the papers. I should be glad to have a few words with you, if only I 'm not disturbing the lady and gentlemen present'—(the visitor bowed to Mashurina, and waved a hand wearing a grey Swedish glove in the direction of Paklin and Ostrodumov)—'if I 'm not interrupting them. . . .'

'No . . . why, . . .' Nezhdanov replied with some difficulty. 'My friends will excuse . . . Won't you sit down?'

The visitor gave his figure an affable bend,

and politely taking hold of the back of a chair, drew it towards himself, but did not sit down—seeing that every one in the room was standing. He merely looked about him with his clear though half-closed eyes.

'Good-bye, Alexey Dmitritch,' Mashurina brought out abruptly; 'I 'll come in later.'

'And I,' added Ostrodumov, 'I too 'll come . . . later on.'

Passing by the visitor as though intentionally slighting him, Mashurina took Nezhdanov's hand, shook it vigorously and walked out, without saluting any one. Ostrodumov followed her, making a quite unnecessary amount of noise with his boots, and even snorting more than once, as though to say: 'So much for you with your beaver collar!'

The visitor followed them both with a civil but rather inquisitive glance; then he bent it upon Paklin, as though expecting that he too would follow the example of the two retreating guests. But Paklin, whose face had worn a peculiar forced smile from the moment of the stranger's appearance, edged away, and shrank into a corner. Then the visitor sank into the chair. Nezhdanov also took a seat.

'My surname's Sipyagin,—you have heard it, perhaps,' the stranger began with proud humility.

But first we must relate how Nezhdanov had met him at the theatre.

There had been a performance of Ostrovsky's drama, *Don't Sit in Another Man's Sledge*, on the occasion of a visit of Sadovsky from Moscow. The part of Rusakov was, as is well known, one of the famous actor's favourite parts. In the morning, Nezhdanov had gone to the box-office, where he found a good many people. He had intended to take a ticket for the pit, but at the very instant he went up to the desk, an officer, standing behind him, held out a three-rouble bill right across Nezhdanov, and shouted to the clerk: 'He'—(*i.e.* Nezhdanov)—'is sure to want change, and I don't, so give me, please, a ticket for the front row, at once. . . . I'm in a hurry!'

'I beg your pardon,' Nezhdanov rejoined sharply, 'I, too, want a ticket for the front row,' and thereupon he flung into the little window three roubles—all the ready money he had. The clerk gave him a ticket, and in the evening Nezhdanov made his appearance in the aristocratic division of the Alexandrinsky Theatre.

He was shabbily dressed, had muddy boots and no gloves; he felt ill at ease and exasperated at himself for feeling so. Next him on the right was sitting a general, studded with stars; on the left the same elegantly dressed

man, the privy councillor Sipyagin, whose visit two days later had so disturbed Mashurina and Ostrodumov. Every now and then the general took a passing look at Nezhdanov as though at something improper, unexpected, and even offensive ; Sipyagin, on the other hand, cast upon him furtive but by no means hostile glances. All the persons surrounding Nezhdanov struck one, to begin with, rather as personages than persons ; and then they were all intimately acquainted with one another, and exchanged brief remarks, or even simple exclamations and words of welcome—some of them speaking across Nezhdanov; while he sat motionless and awkward in his wide, comfortable arm-chair, like a kind of pariah. There were bitterness and shame and disgust in his soul; he did not gain much pleasure from Ostrovsky's comedy and Sadovsky's acting. And suddenly, marvellous to relate, during an *entr'acte*, his neighbour on the left, not the starred general, but the other, who wore no sign of distinction of any kind, addressed him softly and courteously, with a kind of ingratiating gentleness. He began speaking of Ostrovsky's play, wished to learn from Nezhdanov, as 'a representative of the younger generation,' what was his opinion of it? Astonished, almost scared, Nezhdanov at first answered abruptly and in monosyllables . . .

his heart was positively throbbing; but then he got angry with himself; what was he agitated for? wasn't he a man like all the rest? And he proceeded to lay down his opinions unconstrainedly, without reserve, and spoke in the end so loudly, with such enthusiasm, that he obviously annoyed his starred neighbour. Nezhdanov was a fervent admirer of Ostrovsky; but for all his appreciation of the talent shown by the author in the comedy, *Don't Sit in Another Man's Sledge*, he could not approve of the unmistakable intention to depreciate civilisation in the burlesqued character of Vihorev. His courteous neighbour listened to him with great attention and with sympathy, and in the next *entr'acte* began talking to him again, not this time of Ostrovsky's play, but of various general topics, of life, of science, and even of politics. He was obviously interested in the eloquent young man. Nezhdanov, far from being constrained even, as the phrase goes, let off steam a little, as much as to say, 'All right, if you want to know—here you are, then!' In his neighbour, the general, he roused more than simple discomfort—positive indignation and suspicion. At the close of the performance, Sipyagin took leave in a very cordial way of Nezhdanov, but did not seek to learn his surname, nor did he mention his own. While he was waiting on

the stairs for his carriage, he jostled against a friend of his, an *aide-de-camp* of the Tsar, Prince G.

'I was looking at you from my box,' the prince said to him, grinning over his perfumed moustaches. 'Do you know whom you were talking to?'

'No, do you?'

'The lad's no fool, eh?'

'Far from it; who is he?'

Then the prince bent over to his ear and whispered in French, 'My brother—yes; he's my brother, a natural son of my father's . . . his name's Nezhdanov. I will tell you about it some day. . . . My father hadn't expected him; that's why he called him Nezhdanov—that is, unexpected. However, he provided for him. . . . *il lui a fait un sort*. . . . We let him have an allowance. He's a fellow with brains . . . he's had, thanks to my father again, a good education. But he's gone utterly crazy, a sort of republican. . . . We don't receive him. . . . *Il est impossible!* But good-bye, they're calling my carriage!' The prince departed, and the next day Sipyagin read in the paper the advertisement Nezhdanov had inserted, and he went to see him. . . .

'My surname's Sipyagin,' he told Nezhdanov,

as he sat on a basket-chair facing him, and looked at him with his ingratiating eyes. 'I learned from the papers that you want a position as tutor, and I have come to you with this proposal. I am married; I have one son—nine years old, a boy—to speak frankly—of excellent abilities. We spend the greater part of the summer and autumn in the country, in the province of S——, four miles from the chief town of the province. Well, would you care to go there with us for the vacation, to teach my son the Russian language and history—the subjects you mentioned in your advertisement? I venture to think you will like me, my family, and the very situation of our place. There 's a first-rate garden, streams, splendid air, a roomy house. . . . Will you consent? If so, I have only to inquire your terms, though I do not imagine,' added Sipyagin with a faint grimace, 'that any difficulties could arise between us on that score.'

All the while Sipyagin was speaking, Nezhdanov stared fixedly at him, at his small head, thrown a little back, at his low and narrow, but clever forehead, his delicate Roman nose, his pleasant eyes, his well-cut lips, from which the amiable words seemed to flow in an easy stream, at his long whiskers drooping after the English fashion—he stared and was puzzled. 'What

does it mean?' he thought. 'Why does this man seem to be making up to me? He's an aristocrat—and I! How have we come together? And what brought him to me?'

He was so absorbed in his reflections that he did not open his mouth even when Sipyagin paused at the end of his speech, awaiting a reply. Sipyagin stole a glance at the corner where Paklin was ensconced, his eyes fixed as intently upon him as Nezhdanov's—was it the presence of this third person which prevented Nezhdanov from speaking out? Sipyagin raised his eyebrows high, as though submitting to the strangeness of the surroundings into which he had dropped, by his own act, however, and raising his voice also, he repeated his question.

Nezhdanov started.

'Of course,' he said rather hurriedly, 'I consent . . . gladly. . . . Though I must own . . . that I can't help feeling some astonishment . . . seeing that I have no recommendation . . . and indeed the opinions I expressed the day before yesterday at the theatre were rather calculated to dissuade you. . . .'

'There you are utterly mistaken, dear Alexey . . . Alexey Dmitritch! isn't that it?' declared Sipyagin smiling; 'I am, I venture to say, well known as a man of liberal, progressive ideas; on the contrary, your opinions, with the excep-

tion of all that is peculiar to youth, ever prone—don't be angry with me—to some exaggeration—those opinions of yours are in no way opposed to my own, and, indeed, I am delighted with their youthful enthusiasm!'

Sipyagin talked without the faintest hesitation; his even, rounded speech dropped 'smooth as honey upon oil.'

'My wife shares my way of thinking,' he went on; 'her views, very likely, approach yours even more closely; that 's natural enough; she is younger! When, the day after our meeting, I read your name in the papers—you had published your name with your address, contrary, I may mention in passing, to the ordinary practice, though I had found out your name already at the theatre—well—that—that fact struck me. I saw in it—in this coincidence—the . . . excuse the superstitious phrase . . . so to say, the finger of fate! You referred to recommendations; but I need no recommendation. Your appearance, your personality attract me. That is enough for me. I am accustomed to believe my eyes. And so—may I reckon on it? You agree?'

'Yes . . . of course . . .' answered Nezhdanov, 'and I will try to justify your confidence; only let me mention one thing now: I am ready to teach your son, but not to look

after him. I am not fit for that—and in fact I don't want to tie myself down, I don't want to lose my freedom.'

Sipyagin waved his hand lightly in the air as though driving away a fly.

'Don't be uneasy. . . . You 're not made of that clay; and I don't want any one to look after him either—I am trying to find a teacher, and I have found him. Well, now, how about terms? financial considerations, filthy lucre?'

Nezhdanov was at a loss what to say. . . .

'Come,' said Sipyagin, bending his whole person forward and affectionately touching Nezhdanov's knee with his finger-tips, 'between gentlemen such questions are settled in a couple of words. I offer you a hundred roubles a month; travelling expenses there and back are my affair, of course. You agree?'

Nezhdanov blushed again.

'That is far more than I meant to ask . . . I——'

'Very good, very good . . .' interposed Sipyagin . . . I look on the matter as settled, then . . . and on you as one of my household.' He got up from his chair and suddenly grew bright and expansive as though he had received a present. In all his gestures there appeared a certain affable familiarity, even playfulness. 'We will set off in a day or two,' he said in an easy tone;

'I like to meet the spring in the country, though by the nature of my occupations I 'm a prosaic creature and chained to town. And so let us reckon your first month as beginning from to-day. My wife and son are already at Moscow. She started before me. We shall find them in the country, in the bosom of nature. We will travel together . . . as bachelors. . . . He, he!' Sipyagin gave a little affected nasal laugh, 'And now——'

He drew out of the pocket of his overcoat a black and silver pocket-book and took out of it a card.

'This is my address here. Come round . . . to-morrow. Yes . . . at twelve o'clock. We will have some more talk. I will develop some of my ideas on education . . . Oh—and we 'll fix the day of our departure.' Sipyagin took Nezhdanov's hand. 'And do you know?' he added, his voice lowered and his head held aslant, 'if you need any advance . . . Please don't stand on ceremony! just a month in advance!'

Nezhdanov simply did not know what to reply, and with the same perplexity he gazed at the face so bright and cordial, and at the same time so alien to him, which was bent so close to him and smiling so kindly at him.

'You don't want it? eh?' whispered Sipyagin.

'If you'll allow me, I'll tell you that to-morrow,' Nezhdanov articulated at last.

'Excellent! And so—till we meet! Till to-morrow!'

Sipyagin dropped Nezhdanov's hand, and was about to go away. . . .

'Allow me to ask,' said Nezhdanov suddenly, 'you told me just now that you found out my name at the theatre? From whom did you learn it?'

'From whom? Oh, from a friend of yours, and I think a relation, Prince . . . Prince G.'

'The *aide-de-camp* of the Tsar?'

'Yes.'

Nezhdanov flushed more hotly than before, and opened his mouth . . . but he said nothing. Sipyagin again pressed his hand, but this time in silence, and bowing first to him, then to Paklin, he put on his hat just in the doorway and went out, still wearing his complacent smile on his face; in it could be discerned the consciousness of the profound impression which his visit must have produced.

IV

SIPYAGIN had scarcely crossed the threshold when Paklin leaped up from his chair, and, rushing up to Nezhdanov, began to congratulate him.

'Well, you have made a fine catch!' he declared, giggling and tapping with his feet. 'Why, do you know who that is? Sipyagin, every one knows him, a *kammerherr*, a pillar of society of a sort, a future minister!'

'I know absolutely nothing of him,' Nezhdanov declared sullenly

Paklin threw up his arms in despair.

'That's just our misfortune, Alexey Dmitritch, that we know no one! We want to produce an effect, we want to turn the whole world upside down, but we live outside that world, we only have to do with two or three friends, and go revolving in a narrow little circle——'

'I beg your pardon,' interposed Nezhdanov: 'that's not true. We only don't care to con-

sort with our enemies; but as for men of our own stamp, as for the people, we are continually entering into relations with them.'

'Stay, stay, stay, stay!' Paklin in his turn interposed. 'In the first place: as for enemies, let me remind you of Goethe's lines:

"Wer den Dichter will verstehn
Muss im Dichter's Lande gehn . . ."

but I say:

"Wer die Feinde will verstehn
Muss im Feinde's Lande gehn . . ."

To avoid one's enemies, not to know their manners and habits, is ridiculous! Ri . . . di . . . cu . . . lous! . . . Yes! yes! If I want to shoot a wolf in the forest I have to know all his holes! . . . Secondly, you talked just now of entering into relations with the people. . . . My dear soul! In 1862 the Poles went "into the forest"; and we are going now into the same forest; that's to say, to the people, who are just as dark and obscure to us as any forest!'

'Then what's to be done, according to you?'

'The Hindoos fling themselves under the wheels of Juggernaut,' Paklin went on gloomily; 'it crushes them, and they die—in bliss. We too have our Juggernaut . . It crushes us indeed, but gives us no bliss.'

'Then what do you say's to be done?' Nezhdanov repeated almost with a shriek. 'Write novels with a "tendency," or what?'

Paklin flung wide his arms and bent his head towards his left shoulder.

'Novels, in any case, you could write, since you have a literary turn. . . . There, don't be angry, I won't! I know you don't like one to refer to it; besides, I agree with you: spinning out that sort of work with "padding" and all the new-fangled phrases too:—"'Ah! I love you!' she bounded. . . . 'It's nothing to me,' he grated." It is anything but a lively job. That's why I repeat, form ties with all classes, from the highest downwards! We musn't rest all our hopes on fellows like Ostrodumov! They're honest, excellent fellows, but then they're dense! dense! Just look at our worthy friend. Why, the very soles of his boots aren't what clever people wear! Why, what made him go away from here just now? He didn't like to remain in the same room, to breathe the same air, as an aristocrat!'

'I must ask you not to speak slightingly of Ostrodumov before me,' Nezhdanov interposed emphatically. 'He wears thick boots because they're cheaper.'

'I did not mean——' Paklin was beginning.

'If he doesn't care to remain in the same room

with an aristocrat,' Nezhdanov continued, raising his voice, 'I applaud him for it; but the great thing is he knows how to sacrifice himself; he will face death, if need be, which you and I will never do!'

Paklin made a piteous little grimace, and pointed to his wasted, crippled little legs.

'Is fighting in my line, my friend Alexey Dmitritch? Good heavens! But never mind all that . . . I repeat, I'm heartily glad of your connection with Mr. Sipyagin, and I even foresee great advantages from that connection, for our cause. You will get into a higher circle! You will see those lionesses, those women of "velvet body worked by springs of steel," as it says in the *Letters from Spain*; study them, my dear boy, study them! If you were an epicurean, I should be positively afraid for you . . . upon my word, I should! But that's not your object in taking such an engagement, of course?'

'I am taking an engagement,' Nezhdanov caught him up, 'for the sake of bread and butter . . . And to get away from all of you for a time!' he added to himself.

'To be sure! to be sure! And so I say to you: study them! What a perfume that gentleman has left behind him!' Paklin sniffed with his nose in the air. 'It's the veritable *ambre* that the mayoress dreamed of in the *Revisor*!

'He questioned Prince G. about me,' Nezhdanov muttered thickly, taking up his position again at the window: 'he probably knows my whole story now.'

'Not probably, but certainly! What of it? I'll bet you it was just that that gave him the idea of taking you as a tutor! Say what you like, you 're an aristocrat yourself by blood, you know. And, of course, that means you're one of themselves! But I 've stayed too long with you; it's time I was at the office, at the exploiter's! Good-bye for the present, my dear boy!'

Paklin was going towards the door, but he stopped and turned round.

'Listen, Alyosha,' he said in an ingratiating tone: 'you refused me just now; you will have money now, I know, but still allow me to make some sacrifice, however trifling, for the common cause! There's no other way I can help, so let me at least with my purse! Look; I put a ten-rouble bill on the table! Is it accepted?'

Nezhdanov made no answer, and did not stir.

'Silence gives consent! Thanks!' cried Paklin joyfully, and he disappeared.

Nezhdanov was left alone. . . . He went on staring through the window-pane into the dark, narrow court, into which no ray of sunshine fell even in summer, and dark too was his face.

Nezhdanov was the son, as we are already aware, of Prince G., a rich adjutant-general, and of his daughter's governess, a pretty 'institute-girl,' who had died on the day of his birth. Nezhdanov had received his early education at a boarding-school from an able and strict Swiss schoolmaster, and afterwards had gone to the university. He had himself wished to study law; but the general, his father, who detested the Nihilists, had made him enter 'in æsthetics,' as with a bitter smile Nezhdanov used to put it, that is, in the faculty of history and philosophy. Nezhdanov's father had been in the habit of seeing him only three or four times a year, but he took an interest in his welfare, and when he died bequeathed him, in memory of 'Nastenka' (his mother) a sum of 6000 roubles, the interest of which was paid him by way of a 'pension,' by his brothers, the Princes G. Paklin had not been wrong in describing him as an aristocrat; everything in him betrayed good birth: his little ears, hands and feet, the delicate but rather small features of his face, his soft skin, his fluffy hair, even his rather mincing but musical voice. He was terribly nervous, terribly self-conscious, impressionable, and even capricious; the false position in which he had been put from his very childhood had made him irritable and quick to take offence; but his inborn magna-

nimity had saved him from becoming suspicious and distrustful. This same false position of Nezhdanov's was the explanation of the contradictions to be met in his character. Daintily clean and fastidious to squeamishness, he forced himself to be cynical and coarse in his language; an idealist by nature, passionate and chaste, bold and timid at the same time, he was as ashamed of his timidity and of his purity as of some disgraceful vice, and made a point of jeering at ideals. His heart was soft and he shunned his fellows; he was easily enraged, and never harboured ill-feeling. He was indignant with his father for having made him study 'æsthetics'; ostensibly, as far as any one could see, he took interest only in political and social questions, and professed the most extreme views (in him they were more than a form of words!); secretly, he revelled in art, poetry, beauty in all its manifestations . . he even wrote verses. He scrupulously concealed the book in which he scribbled them, and of all his friends in Petersburg, only Paklin —and that solely through the intuition peculiar to him—suspected its existence. Nothing so deeply offended, so outraged Nezhdanov as the faintest allusion to his poetical compositions—to that, as he considered, unpardonable weakness. Thanks to his Swiss schoolmaster, he knew a good many facts, and was not afraid

of hard work; he even worked with positive fervour, though rather spasmodically and irregularly. His comrades loved him . . . they were attracted by his uprightness of character, his goodness and purity; but Nezhdanov had been born under no lucky star; life did not come easily to him. He was deeply conscious of this himself, and knew he was lonely in spite of the devotion of his friends.

He still stood at the window, thinking, thinking mournfully and drearily of the journey before him, of the new, unexpected turn in his life. He did not regret leaving Petersburg—he was leaving nothing in it specially precious to him; besides, he knew he would return in the autumn. And still a mood of dread and doubt came over him; he felt an involuntary dejection.

'A nice teacher I shall make!' crossed his mind, 'a fine sort of schoolmaster!' He was ready to reproach himself for having undertaken the task of education, and yet such a reproach would have been unjust. Nezhdanov possessed a fair amount of knowledge, and, in spite of his uneven temper, children were at ease with him, and he, too, readily grew fond of them. The depression which came upon Nezhdanov was that feeling preceding every change of place—that feeling known to all melancholy, all brooding natures. To people of a bold, sanguine character

it is unknown: they are rather disposed to rejoice when the daily routine of life is broken up, when their habitual surroundings are changed. Nezhdanov became so deeply absorbed in his meditations that by degrees, almost unconsciously, he began translating them into words; the emotions passing over him were already ranging themselves into rhythmic cadences.

'Oof, the devil!' he cried aloud, 'I do believe I'm on the high road to a poem!'

He shook himself, turned away from the window. Catching sight of Paklin's ten-rouble note lying on the table, he thrust it in his pocket and set to walking up and down the room.

'I must take an advance,' he mused to himself; 'a good thing this gentleman offers it. A hundred roubles . . . and from my brothers —from their excellencies—a hundred roubles . . . fifty for debts, fifty or seventy for the journey . . . and the rest for Ostrodumov. And what Paklin gives—he can have to. And we shall have to get something from Merkulov too.'

Even while he was making these calculations in his head, the same cadences were again astir within him. He stopped, fell to dreaming . . . and, his eyes fixed on the distance, he stood rooted to the spot. Then his hands, gropingly, as it were, felt for and opened a drawer in the

table and drew out from the very bottom of it a manuscript-book.

He sank on to a chair, his eyes still turned away, took up a pen, and humming to himself, at times shaking back his hair, with much blotting and scratching out, he set to tracing line after line.

The door into the anteroom was half opened, and Mashurina's head appeared. Nezhdanov did not notice her and went on with his work. Long and intently Mashurina gazed upon him, and, with a shake of her head to right and left, drew back. . . . But Nezhdanov all at once drew himself up, looked round, and exclaiming with vexation, 'Oh, you!' he flung the book into the table drawer.

Then Mashurina advanced with a firm step into the room.

'Ostrodumov sent me to you,' she observed jerkily, 'to find out when you can get the money. If you can let us have it to-day we will start this evening.'

'To-day I can't,' rejoined Nezhdanov, and he frowned; 'come to-morrow.'

'At what o'clock?'

'Two o'clock.'

'Very well.'

Mashurina was silent for a little. All at once she held out her hand to Nezhdanov.

'I think I interrupted you—forgive me; and besides . . . I'm just going away. Who knows whether we shall meet again? I wanted to say good-bye to you.'

Nezhdanov pressed her chilly red fingers.

'You saw that gentleman here?' he began; 'we came to terms. I am going to him as a tutor. His estate is in S—— province, near S—— itself.'

A rapturous smile flashed across Mashurina's face.

'Near S——! Then perhaps we shall see each other again. They may possibly send us there.' Mashurina sighed 'Ah, Alexey Dmitritch. . . .'

'What?' inquired Nezhdanov.

Mashurina assumed a concentrated look.

'Never mind. Good-bye. Never mind.'

Once more she pressed Nezhdanov's hand and retreated.

'And in all Petersburg there is no one cares for me like that . . . queer creature!' was Nezhdanov's thought. 'But why need she have interrupted me? . . . It's all for the best, though!'

The following morning Nezhdanov betook himself to Sipyagin's town residence, and there, in a magnificent study, filled with furniture of a severe style, in full harmony with the dignity of a liberal politician and modern gentleman,

he sat before a huge bureau, on which lay, in orderly arrangement, papers of no use to any one, beside gigantic ivory knives which never cut anything. For a whole hour he listened to the liberal-minded master of the house, and was immersed in the smooth flood of his clever, affable, condescending words. At last he received a hundred roubles in advance, and ten days later the same Nezhdanov, half-reclining on a velvet sofa in a reserved first-class compartment, beside this same clever liberal politician and modern gentleman, was being carried to Moscow on the jolting lines of the Nikolavsky railway.

V

IN the drawing-room of a large stone house, with columns and a Greek façade, built in the twenties of the present century by a landowner noted for devotion to agriculture and for the free use of his fists, the father of Sipyagin, his wife, Valentina Mihalovna, a very handsome woman, was from hour to hour expecting her husband's arrival, for which she had been prepared by a telegram. The decoration of the drawing-room bore the stamp of a modern, refined taste; everything in it was charming and attractive—everything, from the agreeably varied tints of the cretonne upholstery and draperies to the different lines of the china, bronze, and glass knick-knacks, scattered about on the tables and *étagères*,—all fell into subdued harmony and blended together in the bright May sunshine which streamed freely in at the high, wide-open windows. The air of the room, heavy with the scent of lilies-of-the-valley (great nosegays of these exquisite spring

flowers made patches of white here and there) was stirred from time to time by an inrush of the light breeze which was softly fluttering over the luxuriant leafage of the garden.

A charming picture! And the lady of the house, Valentina Mihalovna, completed the picture—lent it life and meaning. She was a tall woman of thirty, with dark brown hair, a dark but fresh face of one uniform tint, recalling the features of the Sistine Madonna, with marvellous deep, velvety eyes. Her lips were rather wide and colourless, her shoulders rather high, her hands rather large. . . . But, for all that, any one who had seen how freely and gracefully she moved about the drawing-room, at one time bending her slender, somewhat constricted figure over her flowers and sniffing them with a smile; at another moving some Chinese vase, then rapidly readjusting her glossy hair and half-closing her divine eyes before the glass—any one, we say, would certainly have exclaimed, to himself or aloud, that he had never met a more fascinating creature!

A pretty, curly-headed boy of nine, in a Scotch kilt, with bare legs, much pomaded and befrizzed, ran impetuously into the drawing-room, and stopped suddenly on seeing Valentina Mihalovna.

'What is it, Kolya?' she asked. Her voice was as soft and velvety as her eyes.

'Well, mamma,' the boy began in confusion, 'auntie sent me here. . . . She told me to bring her some lilies-of-the-valley . . . for her room. . . . She has none.'

Valentina Mihalovna took her little son by the chin and lifted his little pomaded head.

'Tell your auntie to send to the gardener for lilies; those lilies are mine. . . . I don't want them touched. Tell her I don't like my arrangements disarranged. Can you repeat my words?'

'Yes, I can . . .' muttered the boy.

'Well, then, . . . say them.'

'I will say . . . I will say . . . you won't let her have them.'

Valentina Mihalovna laughed. Her laugh, too, was soft.

'I see it's no use giving you messages. Well, never mind; tell her anything you think of.'

The boy hurriedly kissed his mother's hand, which was completely covered with rings, and rushed headlong away.

Valentina Mihalovna followed him with her eyes, sighed, and went up to a cage of gold wire, on the walls of which a green parrot was clambering, warily hooking on by his beak and

his claws; she teased him with her finger-tip; then sank into a low lounge, and, taking from a carved round table the last number of the *Revue des Deux Mondes*, she began to skim its pages.

A respectful cough made her look round. In the doorway stood a handsome footman in livery and a white cravat.

'What is it, Agafon?' inquired Valentina Mihalovna, still in the same soft voice.

'Semyon Petrovitch Kallomyetsev is here. Shall I show him up?'

'Ask him up, of course. And send word to Marianna Vikentyevna to come down to the drawing-room.'

Valentina Mihalovna flung the *Revue des Deux Mondes* on a little table, and, leaning back on the lounge, she turned her eyes upwards and looked thoughtful, which suited her extremely.

From the very way Semyon Petrovitch Kallomyetsev, a young man of two-and-thirty, entered the room, easily, carelessly, and languidly, from the way he suddenly beamed politely, bowed a little on one side, and drew himself up like elastic afterwards, from the way he spoke, half-condescendingly, half-affectedly, respectfully took Valentina Mihalovna's hand, and effusively kissed it—from all this one

might judge that the visitor was not an inhabitant of the province, a mere casual country neighbour, even one of the richest, but a real Petersburg swell of the highest fashion. He was dressed, too, in the best English style: the coloured border of his white cambric handkerchief peeped in a tiny triangle out of the flat side-pocket of his tweed jacket; a single eyeglass dangled on a rather wide black ribbon; the pale dull tint of his Suède gloves corresponded with the pale grey of his check trousers. Close shorn was Mr. Kallomyetsev, and smoothly shaven; his rather feminine face with its small eyes set close together, its thin depressed nose, and its full red lips, was expressive of the agreeable ease of a well-bred nobleman. It was all affability . . . and it very easily turned vindictive, even coarse; some one or something had but to vex Semyon Petrovitch, to jar on his conservative, patriotic, and religious principles—oh! then he became pitiless! All his elegance evaporated instantly; his soft eyes glowed with an evil light; his little pretty mouth gave forth ugly words—and appealed, with piteous whines appealed, to the strong arm of the government!

Semyon Petrovitch's family had sprung from simple market-gardeners. His great-grandfather had been known in the parts from which

he came as Kolomentsov. . . . But his grandfather even had changed his name to Kollometsov; his father wrote it Kallometsev, finally Semyon Petrovitch had inserted the *y*, and quite seriously regarded himself as an aristocrat of the purest blood; he even hinted at his family's being descended from the Barons von Gallenmeier, one of whom had been the Austrian field-marshal in the Thirty Years' War. Semyon Petrovitch was in the ministry of the Court, he had the title of a *kammer-yunker*. He was prevented by his patriotism from entering the diplomatic service, for which he seemed destined by everything, his education, his knowledge of the world, his popularity with women, and his very appearance . . . *mais quitter la Russie! jamais!* Kallomyetsev had a fine property, and had connections; he had the reputation of a trustworthy and devoted man—*un peu trop féodal dans ses opinions*—as the distinguished Prince B——, one of the leading lights of the Petersburg official world, had said of him. Kallomyetsev had come to S—— province on a two months' leave to look after his property, that is to say, 'to scare some and squeeze others.' Of course, there's no doing anything without that.

'I expected to find Boris Andreitch here by

now,' he began, politely swaying from one foot to the other, and with a sudden sidelong look in imitation of a very important personage.

Valentina Mihilovna made a faint grimace.

'Or you would not have come?'

Kallomyetsev all but fell backwards, so unjust, so inconsistent with the facts did Valentina Mihalovna's question seem to him.

'Valentina Mihalovna!' he cried, 'heavens! could you suppose . . .'

'Well, well, sit down. Boris Andreitch will be here directly. I have sent the carriage to the station for him. Wait a little. . . . You will see him. What time is it now?'

'Half-past two,' replied Kallomyetsev, pulling out of his waistcoat pocket a big gold watch decorated with enamel. He showed it to Madame Sipyagin. 'Have you seen my watch? It was a present from Mihail, you know, the Servian prince . . . Obrenovitch. Here's his crest, look. We are great friends. We used to go hunting together. A capital fellow! And a hand of iron, as a ruler should have! Oh, he won't stand any nonsense! No-o-o!'

Kallomyetsev sank into an easy chair, crossed his legs, and began in a leisurely way to draw off his left glove.

'If only we had some one like Mihail here in our province!'

'Why? Are you discontented with anything?'

Kallomyetsev puckered up his nose.

'Yes, always that provincial council! That provincial council! What good is it? It simply weakens the administration and arouses . . . superfluous ideas. . . .' (Kallomyetsev waved his bare left hand, freed from the compression of the glove) '. . . and impossible expectations.' (Kallomyetsev breathed on his hand.) 'I have talked of this at Petersburg . . . *mais bah!* The wind's not in that quarter now. Even your husband . . . imagine! But of course he's a well-known liberal!'

Madame Sipyagin drew herself up on the little lounge.

'What? You, M'sieu Kallomyetsev, you in opposition to the government!'

'I? In opposition? Never! On no account! *Mais j'ai mon franc parler*, I sometimes criticise, but I always submit!'

'And I do just the opposite; I don't criticise and I don't submit.'

'*Ah! mais c'est un mot!* I will, if you will allow me, repeat your remark to my friend, *Ladislas—vous savez*—he is writing a society novel, and has already read me some chapters.

It will be magnificent! *Nous aurons enfin le grand monde russe peint par lui-même.*'

'Where is it to appear?'

'In the *Russian Messenger*, of course. It is our *Revue des Deux Mondes.* I see you are reading that.'

'Yes; but do you know it is getting very dull?'

'Perhaps . . . perhaps. . . . And the *Russian Messenger*, perhaps, for some time past—to speak in the language of the day—has been just a wee bit groggy.'

Kallomyetsev laughed heartily; he thought it very amusing to say 'groggy,' and even 'a wee bit.'

'*Mais c'est un journal qui se respecte,*' he went on. 'And that's the chief thing. I, I must admit, take very little interest in Russian literature; such plebeians are always figuring in it nowadays. It's positively come to the heroine of a novel being a cook, a plain cook, *parole d'honneur!* But Ladislas's novel I shall certainly read. *Il y aura le petit mot pour rire* . . . and the tendency! the tendency! The nihilists will be exposed. I can answer for Ladislas's way of thinking on that subject, *qui est très correct.*'

'More than one can say for his past,' remarked Madame Sipyagin.

'*Ah! jetons un voile sur les erreurs de sa*

jeunesse!' cried Kallomyetsev, and he pulled off his right glove.

Again Valentina Mihilovna faintly fluttered her eyelids. She was in the habit of making rather free use of her marvellous eyes.

'Semyon Petrovitch,' she observed, 'may I ask you why it is that in speaking Russian you use so many French words? I fancy . . . excuse my saying so . . . that 's gone out of fashion.'

'Why? why? Every one has not such a perfect mastery of our mother-tongue as you, for instance. As for me, I recognise the Russian language as the language of imperial decrees, of government regulations; I prize its purity. I do homage to Karamzin! . . . But the Russian, so to say, everyday language . . . does it really exist? How, for instance, could you translate my exclamation *de tout à l'heure*? *C'est un mot!* It 's a word! . . . Fancy!'

'I should say: that 's a clever saying.'

Kallomyetsev laughed.

'A clever saying! Valentina Mihalovna! But don't you feel there 's . . . something scholastic directly. . . . All the raciness has gone. . . .'

'Well, you won't convince me. But what is Marianna doing?' She rang the bell; a page appeared.

'I gave orders to ask Marianna Vikentyevna

to come down to the drawing-room. Hasn't my message been taken to her?'

Before the page had time to answer, there was seen in the doorway behind him a young girl in a loose dark blouse, with her hair cropped short, Marianna Vikentyevna, Sipyagin's niece.

VI

'I BEG your pardon, Valentina Mihalovna,' she said, going towards Madame Sipyagin; 'I was busy and I lingered.'

Then she bowed to Kallomyetsev, and, moving a little aside, seated herself on a small ottoman near the parrot, who had begun flapping his wings and craning towards her directly he caught sight of her.

'Why are you sitting so far away, Marianna?' observed Madame Sipyagin, following her with her eyes to the ottoman. 'Do you want to be close to your little friend? Only fancy, Semyon Petrovitch,' she turned to Kallomyetsev, 'that parrot's simply in love with dear Marianna.'

'That does not astonish me!'

'And me he can't endure.'

'Well, that is astonishing! You tease him, I suppose?'

'Never; quite the contrary. I give him sugar. But he will take nothing from me.

No . . . it's a case of sympathy . . . and antipathy.'

Marianna glanced up from under her eyelids at Madame Sipyagin . . . and Madame Sipyagin glanced at her.

These two women did not like each other. In comparison with her aunt, Marianna might almost have been called 'a plain little thing.' She had a round face, a large hawk nose, grey eyes, also large and very clear, thin eyebrows, thin lips. She had cropped her thick dark-brown hair, and she looked unsociable. But about her whole personality there was something vigorous and bold, something stirring and passionate. Her feet and hands were tiny; her strongly knit, supple little body recalled the Florentine statuettes of the sixteenth century; she moved lightly and gracefully.

Marianna's position in the Sipyagins' household was a rather difficult one. Her father, a very clever and energetic man of half-Polish extraction, gained the rank of a general, but was suddenly ruined by being detected in a gigantic fraud on the government; he was brought to trial . . . condemned, deprived of his rank and his nobility, and sent to Siberia. Afterwards he was pardoned . . . and brought back; but he did not succeed in climbing up again, and

died in extreme poverty. His wife, Sipyagin's sister, the mother of Marianna (she had no other children), could not endure the blow which had demolished all her prosperity, and died soon after her husband. Sipyagin gave his niece a home in his own house; but she was sick of a life of dependence; she strove towards freedom with all the force of her uncompromising nature, and between her and her aunt there raged a constant though hidden warfare. Madame Sipyagin considered her a nihilist and an atheist; Marianna, for her part, hated Madame Sipyagin, as her unconscious oppressor. Her uncle she held aloof from, as she did, indeed, from every one else. She simply held aloof from them; she was not afraid of them; she had not a timid temper.

'Antipathy,' repeated Kallomyetsev; 'yes, that's a strange thing. Every one is aware, for instance, that I'm a deeply religious man, orthodox in the fullest sense of the word; but a priest's flowing locks—his mane—I can't look at with equanimity; I have a sensation of positive nausea.'

And Kallomyetsev, with a reiterated wave of his clenched fist, tried to express his sensations of nausea.

'Hair in general seems rather to worry you, Semyon Petrovitch,' observed Marianna; 'I am

sure you can't look at any one with equanimity whose hair is cropped like mine.'

Madame Sipyagin slowly raised her eyebrows and bent her head, as though amazed at the free and easy way in which young girls nowadays enter into conversation; while Kallomyetsev gave a condescending simper.

'Of course,' he replied, 'I cannot but feel regret for lovely curls like yours, Marianna Vikentyevna, which have fallen beneath the remorseless scissors; but I have no feeling of antipathy; and, in any case, . . . your example would have . . . would have . . . *proselytised* me!'

Kallomyetsev could not find the Russian word, and did not want to speak French after his hostess's observations.

'Thank goodness, dear Marianna does not wear spectacles yet,' put in Madame Sipyagin, 'and has not parted with cuffs and collars, though she does study natural science, to my sincere regret; and is interested in the woman question too . . . Aren't you, Marianna?'

This was all said with the object of embarrassing Marianna; but she was not embarrassed.

'Yes, auntie,' she answered, 'I read everything that's written about it; I try to understand exactly what the question is.'

'That's what it is to be young!'—Madame Sipyagin turned to Kallomyetsev; 'you and I don't care about these things now—eh?'

Kallomyetsev smiled sympathetically; he was bound to bear with the lady's jesting humour.

'Marianna Vikentyevna,' he began, 'is filled with the idealism . . . the romanticism of youth . . . which in time . . .'

'But I am slandering myself,' Madame Sipyagin interrupted: 'I take an interest in such questions too. I'm not quite elderly yet, you know.'

'And I take an interest in all such subjects,' Kallomyetsev exclaimed hurriedly; 'only I would forbid talking about it.'

'You would forbid talking about it?' Marianna repeated inquiringly.

'Yes! I would say to the public: I don't hinder your taking an interest . . . but as for talking . . hush!'—he put his finger to his lips—'any way, talking *in print*—I would prohibit—unconditionally!'

Madame Sipyagin laughed.

'What? You would have a commission appointed in some department to decide the question, wouldn't you?'

'And why not a commission? Do you think we should decide the question worse than all

the hungry penny-a-liners, who can never see beyond their noses, and fancy they are . . . geniuses of the first rank? We would appoint Boris Andreevitch president.'

Madame Sipyagin laughed more than ever.

'You must take care; Boris Andreevitch is sometimes such a Jacobin——'

'Jackó, jackó, jackó,' called the parrot.

Valentina Mihalovna shook her handkerchief at him.

'Don't prevent sensible people from talking! . . . Marianna, quiet him.'

Marianna turned to the cage and began scratching the parrot's neck, which he offered her at once.

'Yes,' Madame Sipyagin continued, 'Boris Andreevitch sometimes astonishes me. He has something . . . something . . . of the tribune in him.'

'*C'est parce qu'il est orateur!*' Kallomyetsev interposed hotly in French. 'Your husband has the gift of words, as no else has; he's accustomed to success, too . . . *ses propres paroles le grisent* . . . add to that a liking for popularity . . . But he's a little off all that, isn't he? *Il boude?*—eh?'

Madame Sipyagin glanced towards Marianna.

'I have not noticed it,' she replied after a brief silence.

'Yes,' Kallomyetsev pursued in a pensive tone; 'he has been overlooked a little.'

Madame Sipyagin again indicated Marianna with a significant glance.

Kallomyetsev smiled and grimaced, as much as to say, 'I understand.'

'Marianna Vikentyevna!' he exclaimed suddenly, in a voice unnecessarily loud, 'are you intending to give lessons in the school again this year?'

Marianna turned round from the cage.

'And does that, too, interest you, Semyon Petrovitch?'

'To be sure; indeed it interests me very much.'

'You would not prohibit that?'

'I would prohibit Nihilists from even thinking about schools; but, under clerical guidance, and with supervision of the clergy, I would found schools myself!'

'Really, now? Well, I don't know what I am going to do this year. Everything turned out so badly last year. Besides, there's no school in summer-time.'

When Marianna talked, her colour gradually deepened as though her words cost her an effort, as though she were forcing herself to go on. There was still a great deal of self-consciousness about her.

'You are not sufficiently prepared?' inquired Madame Sipyagin with a quiver of irony in her voice.

'Perhaps not.'

'What?' Kallomyetsev exclaimed again. 'What do I hear? Merciful heavens! is preparation needed to teach the little peasant wenches their A B C?'

But at that instant Kolya ran into the drawing-room shouting: 'Mamma! mamma! papa is coming!' and after him there came rolling in on her fat little feet a grey-haired lady in a cap and yellow shawl, and she too announced that dear Boris would be here directly! This lady was Sipyagin's aunt, Anna Zaharovna by name. All the persons who were in the drawing-room jumped up from their places and rushed into the anteroom, and from there down the stairs out to the principal entrance. A long avenue of lopped fir-trees led from the highroad straight to this entrance; already a carriage was dashing along it, harnessed with four horses. Valentina Mihalovna, standing in front of all, waved her handkerchief, Kolya uttered a piercing shout; the coachman deftly drew up the heated horses, the groom flew headlong from the box and almost tore the carriage door off, lock, hinges, and all; and, with an amiable smile on his lips, in his eyes,

over his whole face, Boris Andreevitch alighted, flinging his cloak off with a single easy gesture. Quickly and gracefully Valentina Mihalovna flung both arms about his neck, and kissed him three times. Kolya was stamping and tugging at his father's coat-tails behind . . . but he first kissed Anna Zaharovna, taking off his very uncomfortable and hideous Scotch travelling cap as a preliminary; then he exchanged greetings with Marianna and Kallomyetsev, who had also come out on the doorstep—(he gave Kallomyetsev a vigorous English '*shake-hands*,' working his arm up and down, as though he were tugging at a bell-rope)—and only then turned to his son; he took him under his arms, lifted him up, and drew him close to his face.

While all this was taking place, Nezhdanov crept stealthily with a guilty air out of the carriage and stood near the front wheel, keeping his cap on and looking up from under his brows. . . . Valentina Mihalovna, as she embraced her husband, glanced sharply over his shoulder at this new figure; Sipyagin had told her beforehand that he was bringing a tutor along with him.

The whole party, still exchanging welcomes and shaking hands with the newly arrived master, moved up the steps, along both sides of which were ranged the principal men- and

maid-servants. They did not kiss his hand—that 'Asiaticism' had long been abandoned—but merely bowed respectfully; and Sipyagin responded to their salutations with a motion more of the nose and brows than of the head.

Nezhdanov too moved slowly up the broad steps. Directly he entered the anteroom, Sipyagin, who had been already on the look-out for him, presented him to his wife, Anna Zaharovna and Marianna; while to Kolya he said, 'This is your tutor, mind you obey him! give him your hand!' Kolya timidly stretched out his hand to Nezhdanov, then stared at him; but apparently finding nothing in him striking or attractive, clung again to his 'papa.' Nezhdanov felt ill at ease just as he had that time at the theatre. He had on an old, rather ugly great-coat; his face and hands were covered with the dust of the road. Valentina Mihalovna said something affable to him; but he did not quite catch her words and made no response; he only noticed that she gazed with peculiar brightness and affection at her husband and kept close to his side. He did not like Kolya's befrizzed, pomaded head of hair; at the sight of Kallomyetsev he thought, 'What a smug little phiz!' and to the others he paid no attention whatever. Sipyagin twice turned his head with dignity as though looking round at

his household gods, a position which threw his long hanging whiskers and rather round little head into striking relief. Then he called to one of the footmen in his powerful resonant voice, which showed no trace of the fatigues of the journey: 'Ivan! take this gentleman to the green room and carry his trunk up there,' and informed Nezhdanov that he could rest now, unpack, and set himself to rights, and dinner would be ready at five o'clock precisely. Nezhdanov bowed, and followed Ivan into the 'green room,' which was on the second story.

The whole party passed into the drawing-room. There words of welcome were repeated once more; a half-blind old nurse came in with a courtesy. From regard for her years, she was allowed by Sipyagin to kiss his hand, and then, with apologies to Kallomyetsev, he retired to his own room, escorted by his wife.

VII

THE spacious and comfortable room to which the servant conducted Nezhdanov looked out on the garden. Its windows were open and a light breeze was faintly fluttering the white blinds; they swelled out like sails, rose and fell again. Gleams of golden light glided slowly over the ceiling; the whole room was full of a fresh, rather moist fragrance of spring. Nezhdanov began by dismissing the servant, unpacking his trunk, washing and changing his clothes. The journey had utterly exhausted him; the constant presence for two whole days of a stranger, with whom he had had much varied and aimless talk, had worked upon his nerves; something bitter, not quite weariness nor quite anger, was secretly astir in the very bottom of his soul; he raged against his faint-heartedness, and still his heart sank.

He went up to the window and began looking at the garden. It was an old-world garden, of rich black soil, such a garden as one does not see

this side of Moscow. It was laid out on a long, sloping hill-side, and consisted of four clearly marked divisions. In front of the house for two hundred paces stretched the flower-garden, with straight little sandy paths, groups of acacias and lilacs, and round flower-beds; on the left, past the stable-yard, right down to the threshing-floor, lay the fruit-garden closely planted with apple, pear, and plum trees, currants and raspberries; just opposite the house rose intersecting avenues of limes forming a great close quadrangle. The view on the right was bounded by the road, shut in by a double row of silver poplars; behind a clump of weeping birches could be seen the round roof of a green-house. The whole garden was in the tender green of its first spring foliage; there was no sound yet of the loud summer buzz of insects; the young leaves twittered, and chaffinches were singing somewhere, and two doves cooed continually in the same tree, and a solitary cuckoo called, shifting her place at each note; and from the distance beyond the mill-pond came the caw in chorus of the rooks, like the creaking of innumerable cart-wheels. And over all this fresh, secluded, peaceful life the white clouds floated softly, with swelling bosoms like great, lazy birds. Nezhdanov gazed, listened, drank in the air through parted chilling lips.

And his heart grew lighter; a sense of peace came upon him too.

Meanwhile, in the bedroom downstairs, there was talk about him. Sipyagin was telling his wife how he had made his acquaintance, and what Prince G. had told him, and what discussions they had had on the journey.

'A good brain!' he repeated, 'and plenty of information; it's true, he's a red republican, but, as you know, that's nothing to me; these fellows have ambition, any way. And besides, Kolya's too young to pick up any nonsense from him.'

Valentina Mihalovna listened to her husband with an affectionate though ironical smile, as though he had been confessing a rather strange, but amusing prank; it was positively agreeable to her that her *seigneur et maître*, so solid a man, so important an official, was still as capable of perpetrating some sudden mischievous freak as a boy of twenty. Standing before the looking-glass in a snow-white shirt and blue silk braces, Sipyagin set to brushing his hair in the English fashion with two brushes, while Valentina Mihalovna, tucking up her little shoes under her on a low Turkish lounge, began to tell him various pieces of news about the estate, about the paper factory, which—sad to say—was not doing as well as it should,

about the cook, whom they would have to get rid of, about the church, off which the stucco was peeling, about Marianna, about Kallomyetsev. . . .

Between the husband and wife there existed a genuine harmony and confidence; they did really live 'in love and good counsel,' as they used to say in old times; and when Sipyagin, on completing his toilet, asked Valentina Mihalovna in chivalrous fashion for 'her little hand,' when she gave him both, and with tender pride watched him kissing them alternately, the feeling expressed in both faces was a fine and genuine feeling, though in her it was reflected in eyes worthy of a Raphael, in him in the commonplace 'peepers' of a civilian general.

Precisely at five o'clock Nezhdanov went down to dinner, which was announced not even by a bell, but the prolonged boom of a Chinese *gong*. The whole party were already assembled in the dining-room. Sipyagin, from above his high cravat, greeted him cordially once more, and assigned him a place at the table between Anna Zaharovna and Kolya. Anna Zaharovna was an old maid, the sister of Sipyagin's deceased father; she smelt of camphor, like stored-up clothes, and had an anxious and dejected air. Her position in the household was

that of Kolya's nurse or governess; her wrinkled face expressed her displeasure when Nezhdanov was seated between her and her little charge. Kolya stole sidelong glances at his new neighbour; the sharp child soon guessed that his tutor was ill at ease, that he was embarrassed; he did not raise his eyes, and scarcely ate anything. Kolya was pleased at this; till then he had been afraid his tutor might turn out to be cross and severe. Valentina Mihalovna too glanced at Nezhdanov.

'He looks like a student,' was her thought, 'and he's not seen much of the world; but his face is interesting and the colour of his hair's original, like that apostle whom the old Italian masters always depict as red-haired; and his hands are clean.' Every one at the table indeed glanced at Nezhdanov and, as it were, had pity on him, leaving him in peace for the present; he was conscious of this and was glad of it, and at the same time, for some reason or other, irritated. The conversation at table was kept up by Kallomyetsev and Sipyagin. They talked about the provincial council, the governor, the highway-rates, the terms of redemption, their common acquaintances in Petersburg and Moscow, of Mr. Katkov's school then just beginning to become influential, the difficulty of getting workmen, fines and damage caused by

Napoleon III

cattle, but also of Bismarck, of the war of 1866, and of Napoleon III., whom Kallomyetsev dubbed a capital fellow. The young *kammer-junker* gave expression to the most retrograde opinions; he went so far at last as to propose —ostensibly as a joke, it 's true—the toast given by a gentleman, a friend of his, at a certain birthday banquet: 'I drink to the only principles I acknowledge,' the ardent landowner had exclaimed, 'to the knout and to Roederer!'

Valentina Mihalovna frowned, and observed that this quotation was *de très mauvais goût.* Sipyagin, on the contrary, expressed the most liberal opinions; amicably, and rather carelessly, he opposed Kallomyetsev; he even jeered at him a little.

'Your apprehensions in regard to the emancipation, my dear Semyon Petrovitch,' he said to him, among other things, 'remind me of a memorial drawn up by our respected and excellent friend Alexey Ivanitch Tveritinov in 1860, and read by him everywhere in the Petersburg drawing-rooms. There was one particularly nice sentence describing how the liberated peasant would infallibly go, torch in hand, over the face of the whole country. You should have seen dear good Alexey Ivanitch, with distended cheeks and round eyes, bringing out of his infantine mouth,

"T-t-torch! t-t-torch! he will go about t-torch in hand!" Well, the emancipation is an accomplished fact. . . . Where is the peasant with the torch?'

'Tveritinov,' Kallomyetsev answered in a gloomy tone, 'was only so far wrong that it's not peasants but other people who are going about with torches.'

At those words Nezhdanov, who till that instant had hardly noticed Marianna—she was sitting at the further diagonal corner—suddenly exchanged glances with her and at once felt that they—that sullen girl and he—were of the same faith, of the same camp. She had made no impression of any kind on him when Sipyagin had introduced him to her; why was it her eye he caught at this moment? He put the question to himself at that point: Wasn't it shameful, wasn't it disgraceful to sit and listen to such opinions without protesting, giving grounds by his silence for believing that he shared them? A second time Nezhdanov glanced at Marianna, and he fancied that he read the answer to his question in her eyes: 'Wait a little,' they seemed to say, 'it's not time now . . . it's not worth while . . . later on; there's always time. . . .'

It was pleasant to him to think that she understood him. He listened again to the

conversation. . . . Valentina Mihalovna had taken her husband's place and was speaking out even more freely, even more radically than he. 'She could not comprehend, 'positively could not com-pre-hend,' how a man of education, still young, could adhere to old-fashioned conventionalism like that!

'I am sure, though,' she added, 'that you only say so for the sake of a paradox! As for you, Alexey Dmitritch,' she turned with a cordial smile to Nezhdanov (he was inwardly amazed that she knew his name and his father's), 'I know you don't share Semyon Petrovitch's apprehensions; Boris described to me your talks with him on the journey.'

Nezhdanov flushed, bent over his plate, and muttered something unintelligible; he was not so much shy as unaccustomed to exchange remarks with such distinguished personages. Madame Sipyagin still smiled upon him; her husband supported her patronisingly. . . . But Kallomyetsev deliberately stuck his round eyeglass between his nose and his eyebrow, and stared at the student who dared not to share his 'apprehensions.' But to confuse Nezhdanov in *that* way was a difficult task; on the contrary, he drew himself up at once, and stared in his turn at the fashionable official; and just as suddenly as he had felt a comrade

in Marianna, he felt a foe in Kallomyetsev! And Kallomyetsev was conscious of it; he dropped his eyeglass, turned away, and tried to laugh . . . but unsuccessfully; only Anna Zaharovna, who secretly adored him, inwardly took his part, and was still more indignant at the uninvited neighbour who was separating her from Kolya.

Shortly afterwards the dinner came to an end. The party moved on to the terrace to drink coffee; Sipyagin and Kallomyetsev lighted cigars. Sipyagin offered Nezhdanov a genuine regalia, but he refused it.

'Ah! to be sure!' cried Sipyagin; 'I'd forgotten; you only smoke your cigarettes!'

'Curious taste,' Kallomyetsev observed, between his teeth.

Nezhdanov almost exploded. 'I know the difference between a regalia and a cigarette well enough, but I don't care to be under obligations,' almost broke from his lips. . . . He restrained himself; but at once scored this second piece of insolence as a 'debt' to pay back against his enemy.

'Marianna!' Madame Sipyagin observed all at once, in a loud voice, 'you need not stand on ceremony before a stranger . . . you may smoke your cigarette, and welcome. Besides,' she added, turning towards Nezhdanov, 'I

have heard that in your set all the young ladies smoke?'

'Quite so,' Nezhdanov answered drily. It was the first word he had spoken to Madame Sipyagin.

'Well, I don't smoke,' she went on, with an ingratiating light in her velvety eyes. . . . 'I am behind the age.'

In a leisurely, circumspect fashion, as though in defiance of her aunt, Marianna drew out a cigarette and a box of matches, and began smoking. Nezhdanov, too, smoked a cigarette, lighting it from Marianna's.

It was an exquisite evening. Kolya and Anna Zaharovna went off into the garden; the rest of the party remained about an hour longer on the terrace, enjoying the air. The conversation became rather lively. . . . Kallomyetsev attacked literature; Sipyagin on that point, too, showed himself a liberal, championed the independence of literature, pointed out its utility, and even referred to Chateaubriand and the fact that the Emperor Alexander Pavlovitch had bestowed on him the order of St. Andrei the First-Called! Nezhdanov did not take part in this discussion; Madame Sipyagin looked at him with an expression which seemed on one hand to approve of his discreet reserve, and on the other, to be a little surprised at it.

Every one went back to the drawing-room for tea.

'We have a very bad habit, Alexey Dmitritch,' said Sipyagin to Nezhdanov; 'we play cards every evening, and what's more, a prohibited game . . . think of that! I won't invite you to join us . . . but Marianna will be so good as to play us something on the piano. You're fond of music, I hope, eh?' And without waiting for an answer, Sipyagin picked up a pack of cards. Marianna sat down to the piano, and played neither well nor ill a few of Mendelssohn's 'Songs without Words.' '*Charmant! charmant! quel toucher!*' Kallomyetsev, from a distance, shrieked as though he had been scalded; but this ejaculation was vociferated rather from politeness; and Nezhdanov too, in spite of the hope expressed by Sipyagin, had no passion for music.

Meanwhile Sipyagin and his wife, Kallomyetsev and Anna Zaharovna, had sat down to cards. . . . Kolya came to say good-night, and after receiving a blessing from his parents and a large glass of milk instead of tea, he went off to bed; his father shouted after him that to-morrow he would begin his lessons with Alexey Dmitritch. Soon afterwards, seeing that Nezhdanov was hanging aimlessly

about in the middle of the room, turning over the leaves of a photograph album with an embarrassed air, Sipyagin told him not to stand on ceremony, but to go and rest, as he must certainly be tired after the journey; that the great principle of his house was freedom.

Nezhdanov availed himself of this permission, and, saying good-night to every one, went away; in the doorway he stumbled against Marianna, and, again looking into her eyes, was again convinced that he should find a comrade in her, though she did not smile, but positively frowned upon him.

He found his room all filled with fragrant freshness; the windows had stood open the whole day. In the garden just opposite his windows, the nightingale was trilling its soft, melodious lay; there was a warm, dull glow in the night sky above the rounded tree-tops; it was the moon making ready to float upwards. Nezhdanov lighted a candle; the grey night-moths flew in from the garden in showers, and went towards the light, while the wind blew them back and set the candle's bluish-yellow light flickering.

'Strange!' thought Nezhdanov, as he lay in his bed. . . . 'They seem good people, liberal, positively human . . . but I feel so sick at heart. The *kammerherr* . . . *kammer-*

junker. . . . Well, morning brings good counsel. . . . It's no good sentimentalising.'

But at that instant, in the garden a watchman knocked loudly and persistently on his board, and a long drawn-out shout was heard:

'Li-isten there-re!'

'Ri-i-ight!' answered another lugubrious voice.

'Ugh! mercy on us!—it's like being in prison!'

VIII

NEZHDANOV woke up early, and without waiting for a servant to make his appearance he dressed and went out into the garden. It was very large and beautiful, this garden, and was kept in splendid order; hired labourers were scraping the paths with spades; among the intense green of the bushes peeped the red kerchiefs of peasant-girls armed with rakes. Nezhdanov made his way to the lake: the fog of early morning had already disappeared from it, but the mist still clung about in parts, in shady nooks in the banks. The sun, not yet high in the sky, beat with rosy light over the broad, silky, leaden-hued surface. Some carpenters were busily at work near the washing-platform; a new, freshly painted boat lay there, feebly rocking from side to side, stirring a faint eddy in the water about it. The men's voices were heard seldom, and in reserved fashion: about everything there was a feeling of morning, of the peace and rapid progress of morning work,

a feeling of order and regularity of life. And behold, at a bend of the avenue Nezhdanov saw before him the very personification of order and regularity—Sipyagin.

He wore an overcoat of a pea-green colour, made like a dressing-gown, and a striped cap; he leaned on an English bamboo cane, and his freshly shaven face was beaming with satisfaction; he had come out to look round his estate. Sipyagin greeted Nezhdanov cordially.

'Aha!' he cried, 'I see you're one of the young and early!' (He probably meant by this not very appropriate saying to express his approval of the fact that Nezhdanov had, like himself, not stayed late in bed.) 'We drink tea all together in the dining-room at eight, and lunch at twelve; at ten you will give Kolya your first lesson in Russian, and at two the history lesson. To-morrow, the 9th of May, is his name-day, and there will be no lessons; but I should like you to begin to-day.'

Nezhdanov bowed, while Sipyagin parted from him in the French fashion, raising his hand several times in rapid succession to his lips and nose, and walked on, smartly swinging his cane and whistling, not at all like an important official or dignitary, but like a good-natured Russian *country gentleman.*

Till eight o'clock Nezhdanov stayed in the

garden enjoying the shade of the old trees, the freshness of the air, the song of the birds; the booming of the gong summoned him to the house, and he found the whole party in the dining-room. Valentina Mihalovna behaved very affably to him; in her morning dress she struck him as perfectly beautiful. Marianna's face wore its usual absorbed and sullen expression. At ten o'clock exactly the first lesson took place in the presence of Valentina Mihalovna; she had first inquired of Nezhdanov whether she would be in his way, and she behaved the whole time very discreetly. Kolya turned out to be an intelligent boy; after the first inevitable awkwardness and hesitation, the lesson went off satisfactorily. Valentina Mihalovna was left apparently well content with Nezhdanov, and several times she addressed him in an ingratiating manner. He held off... but not too much so. Valentina Mihalovna was present also at the second lesson, on Russian history. She declared with a smile that on that subject she needed a teacher no less than Kolya himself, and behaved as quietly and sedately as during the first lesson. From three till five o'clock, Nezhdanov sat in his own room, wrote letters to Petersburg, and felt neither well nor ill: he was free from boredom and from depression; his overwrought nerves were

gradually being soothed. They were unhinged again at dinner-time, though Kallomyetsev was absent, and the ingratiating friendliness of his hostess was unchanged; but that very friendliness rather irritated Nezhdanov. Moreover, his neighbour, the old maiden lady Anna Zaharovna, was obviously sulky and antagonistic, while Marianna was still serious, and Kolya even kicked him rather too unceremoniously. Sipyagin, too, seemed out of spirits. He was very much dissatisfied with the overseer of his paper-mill, a German whom he had engaged at a high salary. Sipyagin began abusing Germans in general, declaring that he was, to a certain extent, a Slavophil, though not a fanatic, and mentioned a young Russian, a certain Solomin, who, it was rumoured, had brought a neighbouring merchant's factory into excellent working order; he had a great desire to make the acquaintance of this Solomin. Towards evening Kallomyetsev, whose property was only eight miles from Arzhano, Sipyagin's village, arrived. There arrived, too, a Mediator, one of those landowners so aptly described by Lermontov in two famous lines:

'A cravat to the ears, and a coat to the heels,
A moustache and a squeak, and eyes muddy and thick.

There came, too, another neighbour with a

dejected, toothless countenance, but exceedingly sprucely dressed; and the district practitioner, a very ignorant doctor, who liked to show off with learned terms; he asserted, for instance, that he preferred Kukolnik to Pushkin because there was so much 'protoplasm' in Kukolnik. They sat down to play cards. Nezhdanov withdrew to his own room and read and wrote till after midnight.

The following day, the 9th of May, was Kolya's patron saint's day. The whole family in three open carriages, with grooms on footboards up behind, drove to church, though it was not a quarter of a mile off. Everything was done in grand and pompous style. Sipyagin had put on the ribbon of his order; Valentina Mihalovna was dressed in a charming Parisian gown of a pale lilac colour, and in church, during the service, she said her prayers over a tiny prayer-book bound in crimson velvet; this little book completely dumbfoundered several old men, one of whom could not resist asking his neighbour: 'Is it a witch's charm, God forgive her, she's using, or what, eh?' The scent of the flowers that filled the church was blended with the powerful odour of new peasants' coats smelling of sulphur, tarred boots, and bast shoes, and above these and other smells rose the overwhelming sweetness of the incense. The

deacons and choristers sang with astounding conscientiousness with the aid of some factory hands who had joined them; they even made an effort at part-singing! There was a moment when every one present felt . . . something like dismay. The tenor voice (it belonged to a factory hand, Klima, a man in a galloping consumption), all alone and unsupported, broke into a chromatic series of flat minor notes; they were terrible, those notes, but if they had been cut out the whole concert would promptly have gone to pieces. . . . However, the thing was got through somehow. Father Ciprian, a priest of the most respectable appearance, in full vestments, delivered a very edifying discourse from a manuscript book; unfortunately, the conscientious father had thought it necessary to introduce the names of some wise Assyrian kings, the pronunciation of which cost him great pains, and though he succeeded in proving some degree of erudition, he was hot and perspiring from the exertion. Nezhdanov, who had not been at church for a long while, hid himself in a corner among the peasant women; they scarcely glanced at him, crossing themselves persistently, bowing low, and discreetly wiping their babies' noses; but the little peasant girls in new coats, and strings of glass drops on their foreheads, and the boys in belted

smocks, with embroidered shoulder-straps and red gussets, stared intently at the new worshipper, turning right round facing him. . . . And Nezhdanov looked at them, and various were his thoughts.

After the service, which lasted a very long while—for the thanksgiving of St. Nikolai the Wonder-worker, as is well known, is almost the most lengthy of all the services of the Orthodox Church—all the clergy, at Sipyagin's invitation, moved across to the manor-house. After performing a few more rites proper to the occasion —even sprinkling the rooms with holy water— they were regaled with a copious lunch, during which the edifying but rather exhausting conversation usual at such times was maintained. Both the master and the mistress of the house, though they never lunched at that time of the day, ate and drank a little. Sipyagin went so far as to tell an anecdote, thoroughly proper, but mirth-moving, and this, in face of his red ribbon and his dignity, produced an impression which might be described as comforting, and moved Father Ciprian to a sense of gratitude and amazement. In return, and also to show that he too on occasion could impart some piece of information, Father Ciprian described a conversation he had had with the bishop, when the latter made a tour of his diocese, and sum-

moned all the priests of the district to see him at the monastery in the town. 'He was severe, very severe with us,' Father Ciprian declared; 'first he cross-questioned us about our parish, our arrangements, and then he began an examination. . . . He turned to me: "What's your church's dedication-day?" "The Transfiguration of our Saviour," said I. "And do you know the anthem for that day?" "I should hope so, indeed!" "Sing it!" Well, I began at once: "Thou wert transfigured on the mountain, O Christ our Lord. . . ." "Stop! what is the Transfiguration, and how must we understand it?" "In one word," said I, "Christ wished to show Himself to His disciples in His glory!" "Good," said he, "here's a little image for you to wear in memory of me." I fell at his feet. "I thank your Reverence!" . . . So he did not send me empty away.'

'I have the honour of his Reverence's personal acquaintance,' Sipyagin observed majestically. 'A most worthy pastor!'

'Most worthy indeed!' Father Ciprian re-echoed. 'Though he makes a mistake in putting too much trust in the diocesan superintendents. . . .'

Valentina Mihalovna mentioned the peasant school, referring to Marianna as the future schoolmistress; the deacon (the supervision of

the school was intrusted to his charge), a man of Titanic build, with long waving hair vaguely recalling the combed tail of an Orlov horse, tried to express his approval; but not reckoning on the strength of his lungs, brought out such a deep note that he intimidated himself and alarmed the others. Soon after this the clergy retired.

Kolya in his new short jacket with gold buttons was the hero of the day; he received presents and congratulations; his hands were kissed on the front stairs and the back stairs, by factory-hands, house-servants, old women and young women, and peasants—the latter, just as in the old serf days, were buzzing round tables laid out before the house with pies and pots of vodka. Kolya was abashed, and delighted, and proud, and shy, all at once; he caressed his parents and ran out of the room; but at dinner Sipyagin ordered up champagne, and before drinking to his son's health he made a speech. He spoke of the significance of 'serving one's country,' and the way he would wish his Nikolai (so he dubbed him) to go . . . and what was due from him: first, to his family; secondly, to his class, to society; thirdly, to the people,—yes, gentlemen, to the people; and fourthly, to the government! Gradually warming up, Sipyagin rose at last to

genuine eloquence, while, like Robert Peel, he thrust one hand into a fold of his frock-coat; he became impressive at the word 'science,' and ended his speech by the Latin exclamation *laboremus*, which he at once translated into Russian. Kolya, with a glass in his hand, had to go the length of the table to thank his father, and be kissed by every one. Again it happened to Nezhdanov to exchange a look with Marianna. . . . They were both, probably, feeling the same thing. . . . But they did not speak to one another.

Everything he saw struck Nezhdanov, however, more as amusing and even interesting than as vexatious and distasteful, while the courteous lady of the house, Valentina Mihalovna, impressed him as a clever woman who knew she was playing a part and was at the same time secretly glad that there was another person clever and penetrating enough to comprehend her. . . . Nezhdanov probably did not suspect how greatly his vanity was flattered by her attitude to him.

The next day lessons began again, and daily life moved on its accustomed way.

A week passed by imperceptibly. . . . What were Nezhdanov's experiences and reflections can best be understood by an extract from a letter to Silin, his best friend, who had been a

schoolfellow of his at the gymnasium. Silin did not live in Petersburg, but in a remote provincial town, with a well-to-do relative, on whom he was utterly dependent. His position was such that it was no good for him even to dream of getting away from there; he was a weakly, timid, and limited man, but of a singularly pure nature. He took no interest in politics, had read some few middling books, played on the flute to while away the time, and was afraid of young ladies. Silin loved Nezhdanov passionately—he was in general fervent in his attachments. To no one did Nezhdanov reveal himself so unreservedly as to Vladimir Silin; when he wrote to him he always felt as if he were in communion with some dear and intimate being inhabiting another world, or with his own conscience. Nezhdanov could not even imagine the possibility of living with Silin again as a comrade in the same town. . . . He would most likely have grown colder to him at once, they had so little in common; but he wrote a great deal to him with eagerness and complete openness. With others—on paper at least—he was always, as it were, showing off or artificial; with Silin—never! Silin, who was a poor hand with his pen, answered very little, in short awkward sentences; nor did Nezhdanov need voluminous replies; he knew

without that that his friend drank in every word of his, as the dust in the road drinks in a drop of rain, kept his secrets as a holy thing, and, buried in a dreary solitude from which he would never emerge, simply lived in his friend's life. To no one in the world had Nezhdanov spoken of his relations with him; they were very precious to him.

'Well, dear friend—my pure Vladimir,' so he wrote to him—he always called him pure, and with good reason—'congratulate me: I have fallen into a snug berth, and can now rest and rally my forces. I am living as a tutor in the house of a rich swell, Sipyagin. I'm teaching his little son, feeding sumptuously (I have never been so well fed in my life!), sleeping soundly, walking to my heart's content in lovely country, and, what is the chief thing, I have escaped for a time from the care of my Petersburg friends; and though at first I was devoured by the most savage *ennui*, now I feel somehow better. Soon I must set to the work you know of (as the proverb has it: If you call yourself a mushroom you must go into the basket), and that's just what they let me come here for; but meanwhile I can lead a delicious animal existence, grow fat, and perhaps write verses, if the fit takes me. Impressions of the country, as they call it, I put off for another time. The estate seems

well managed, though the factory, perhaps, is in rather a bad way. As for the peasants, some seem rather unapproachable; and the hired servants have all such decorous faces. But we will go into all that later on. The people of the house are cultivated, liberal; Sipyagin is always so condescending—oh! so condescending; and then all of a sudden he flies off into eloquence—a most highly cultivated person! The lady of the house is a perfect beauty—a sly puss, I should fancy; she fairly watches over one; and oh, isn't she soft!—not a bone in her body! I am afraid of her; you know what my manners are like with ladies! There are neighbours—wretched creatures—and one old lady, who worries me. . . . But I am most interested in a girl—whether she is a relation or a companion, goodness knows; I have hardly spoken two words to her, but I feel she's made of the same clay as myself. . . .'

Here followed a description of Marianna's appearance and all her ways; then he went on:

'That she's unhappy, proud, self-conscious, reserved, and, most of all, unhappy, I feel no doubt about. Why she's unhappy, so far I don't know. That she's honest is clear to me: whether she is good-natured is still a question. Are there, in fact, any good-natured women

who are not stupid? And is it necessary there should be? However, I know little enough of women in general. The lady of the house does not like her . . . and she reciprocates. . . . But which of them is in the right I don't know. I should suppose that it's rather the lady who is in the wrong . . . seeing that she's so very polite to her, while the girl's very eyebrows twitch with nervousness when she speaks to her patroness. Yes, she's a very nervous creature; in that, too, she's like me. And she's *out of joint* like me, though probably not in just the same way.

'When all this is a little clearer I will write to you. . . .

'She scarcely ever speaks to me, as I said just now; but in the few words she has addressed to me (always suddenly and unexpectedly) there is a sort of rough frankness. . . . I like it.

'By the way, is your relation still keeping you on short commons? Isn't he beginning to think of his end?

'Have you read the article in the *Messenger of Europe* on the last pretenders in the province of Orenburg? That happened in 1834, my dear boy! I don't care for that journal, and the author's a Conservative; but it's an interesting thing, and sets one thinking. . . .'

IX

MAY had already passed into its second half. The first hot days of summer had come.

At the end of his history lesson one day Nezhdanov went out into the garden, and from the garden into a birchwood which adjoined it on one side. Part of this wood had been cut down by timber merchants fifteen years before, but all the clearings were overgrown with thick young birch-trees. The trunks of the trees stood close like columns of soft dull silver, striped with greyish rings; the tiny leaves were of a uniform shining green, as though some one had washed them and put varnish on them; the spring grass pushed up in little sharp tongues through the dark even layer of last year's fallen leaves. Little narrow paths ran up and down all over the wood; yellow-beaked blackbirds, with a sudden cry, as though in alarm, fluttered across the paths, low down, close to the earth, and dashed like mad into the bushes. After walking for half an hour,

Nezhdanov sat down at last on a felled stump, surrounded by grey, ancient chips; they lay in little heaps as they had fallen, struck off by the axe. Many times had the winter snow covered them and melted from off them in the spring, and no one had touched them. Nezhdanov sat with his back to a thick hedge of young birches, in the dense, soft shade. He thought of nothing; he gave himself up utterly to that peculiar sensation of the spring in which, for young and old alike, there is always an element of pain . . . the restless pain of expectation in the young . . . the settled pain of regret in the old. . . .

Suddenly Nezhdanov heard the sound of approaching footsteps.

It was not one person coming, and not a peasant in shoes or heavy boots, nor a bare-foot peasant woman. It seemed as though two persons were walking at a slow, even pace. . . . There was the light rustle of a woman's dress. . . .

Suddenly there came the sound of a hollow voice—the voice of a man: 'And so that is your last word?—never?'

'Never!' repeated another voice—a woman's—which seemed to Nezhdanov familiar, and an instant later, at a turn in the path, which at that point skirted the young birches, Marianna

stepped out, escorted by a dark, black-eyed man, whom Nezhdanov had never seen till that instant.

Both stopped, as if they had been shot, at the sight of Nezhdanov, while he was so astounded that he did not even get up from the stump on which he was sitting. . . . Marianna blushed up to the roots of her hair, but at once smiled contemptuously. For whom was the smile meant—for herself for having blushed, or for Nezhdanov? . . . Her companion knitted his bushy brows, and there was a gleam in the yellowish whites of his uneasy eyes. Then he looked at Marianna, and both of them, turning their backs on Nezhdanov, walked away in silence, at the same slow pace, while he followed them with a stare of amazement.

Half an hour later he went home and to his room, and when, summoned by the booming of the gong, he went into the drawing-room, he saw in it the same swarthy stranger who had come upon him in the copse. Sipyagin led Nezhdanov up to him and introduced him as his *beau-frère*, the brother of Valentina Mihalovna—Sergei Mihalovitch Markelov.

'I hope you will be good friends, gentlemen!' cried Sipyagin, with the majestically affable though absent-minded smile characteristic of him.

Markelov performed a silent bow; Nezh-

danov responded in a similar manner . . . while Sipyagin, with a slight toss of his little head and a shrug of his shoulders, moved away, as much as to say, 'I have done my duty by you . . . and whether you really do become friends is a matter of no importance to me!'

Then Valentina Mihalovna approached the couple, who stood immovable, and again presented them to one another, and with the peculiar caressing brightness which she seemed able at will to shed over her marvellous eyes, she addressed her brother:

'How is it, *cher Serge*, you've quite forgotten us? you did not even come for Kolya's name-day. Or have you had such piles of work? He's introducing new arrangements with his peasants,' she turned to Nezhdanov—'very original ones too; three-quarters of everything for them, and one quarter for himself; and even then he thinks he gets too much.'

'My sister's fond of joking,' Markelov in his turn addressed himself to Nezhdanov; 'but I'm prepared to agree with her that for *one* man to take a quarter of what belongs to a *hundred* at least, is certainly too much.'

'And have you, Alexey Dmitrievitch, noticed that I'm fond of joking?' inquired Madame Sipyagin, still with the same caressing softness both of eyes and voice.

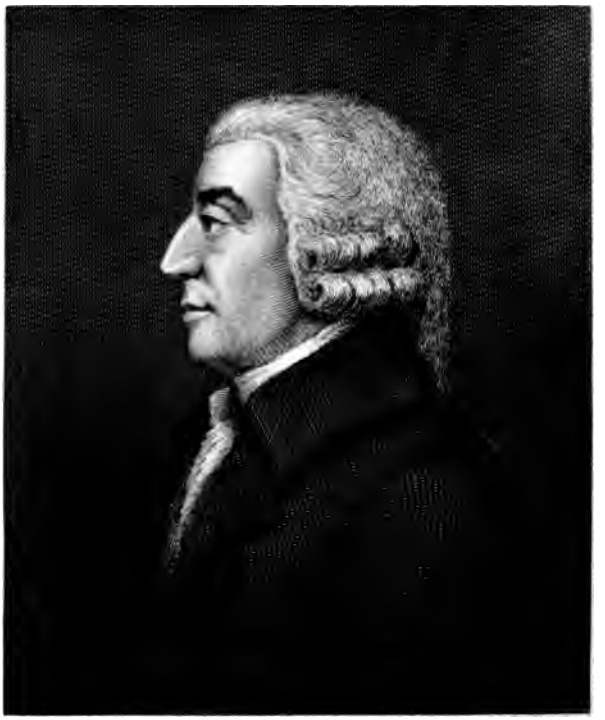
Nezhdanov found no reply; and at that moment Kallomyetsev was announced. The lady of the house went to meet him, and a few moments later the butler appeared and in a sing-song voice announced that dinner was on the table.

At dinner Nezhdanov could not help watching Marianna and Markelov. They sat side by side, both with eyes downcast, and lips compressed, with a severe, gloomy, almost exasperated expression. Nezhdanov kept wondering too how Markelov could be Madame Sipyagin's brother. There was so little resemblance to be discerned between them. One thing, perhaps—both were of dark complexion; but in Valentina Mihalovna the uniform tint of her face, arms, and shoulders constituted one of her charms . . . while in her brother it attained that degree of swarthiness which polite people describe as 'bronzed,' but which, to the Russian eye, inevitably suggests a leather gaiter. Markelov had curly hair, a rather hooked nose, full lips, sunken cheeks, a contracted chest, and sinewy hands. He was sinewy and dry all over; and he spoke in a harsh, abrupt, metallic voice. His eyes were sleepy, his face surly, a regular dyspeptic! He ate little, and busied himself in rolling up little pellets of bread, only

occasionally casting a glance at Kallomyetsev, who had just returned from the town, where he had seen the governor, upon a matter rather unpleasant for him, Kallomyetsev. Upon this point he was studiously silent, though on other subjects he launched out freely.

Sipyagin, as before, pulled him up when he went too far. He laughed a great deal at his anecdotes, his *bons mots*, though he thought, '*qu'il est un affreux réactionnaire.*' Kallomyetsev declared among the rest that he had been thrown into perfect raptures over the name the peasants—*oui, oui! les simples moujiks!*—give to the lawyers—'*Loiars! loiars!*' he repeated in ecstasy: '*ce peuple russe est délicieux.*' Then he related how once when visiting a peasant-school he had put to the pupils the question: 'What is an ornithorhincus?' And as no one was able to answer, not even the teacher, then he, Kallomyetsev, put them another question: 'What is a wendaru?' quoting the line of Hemnitsev: 'The senseless wendaru that apes the other beasts.' And no one had answered that either. So much for your peasant schools!

'But excuse me,' remarked Valentina Mihalovna, 'I don't know myself what those animals are.'



Adam Smith

'Madam!' cried Kallomyetsev, 'there's not the slightest necessity for you to know.'

'And what need is there for the peasants to know?'

'Why, because it's better for them to know of an ornithorhincus or a wendaru than of Proudhon—or even Adam Smith!'

But at this point Sipyagin again pulled him up, maintaining that Adam Smith was one of the leading lights of human thought, and that it would be a good thing if all were to imbibe his principles . . . (he poured himself out a glass of Château d'Yquem . . .) with their mothers' (he held it to his nose and sniffed at the wine) milk! . . . He emptied the glass; Kallomyetsev drank too, and praised the wine.

Markelov paid no special attention to the flights of the Petersburg *kammerjunker*, but twice he looked inquiringly at Nezhdanov, and, tossing up a pellet of bread, all but flung it straight at the loquacious visitor's nose. . . .

Sipyagin let his brother-in-law alone; Valentina Mihalovna, too, did not address him; it was clear that both husband and wife were in the habit of regarding Markelov as an unaccountable creature, whom it was better not to provoke.

After dinner, Markelov went off to the billiard-room to smoke a pipe, and Nezhdanov

went to his own room. In the corridor he came upon Marianna. He was about to pass her . . . she stopped him with an abrupt gesture.

'Mr. Nezhdanov,' she began in a not quite steady voice, 'it ought really to be just the same to me what you think about me; but all the same I consider . . . I consider . . . (she was at a loss for a word . . .) I consider it fitting to tell you, that when you met me to-day in the copse with Mr. Markelov . . . Tell me, no doubt you wondered why it was we were both confused, and why we had come there, as though by appointment?'

'It certainly did strike me as a little strange,' Nezhdanov began.

'Mr. Markelov,' Marianna broke in, 'made me an offer, and I refused him. That's all I had to say to you; so—good-night. You can think of me what you choose.'

She turned swiftly away and walked with rapid steps along the corridor.

Nezhdanov went to his room, sat down at his window and pondered. 'What a strange girl! and why this wild freak, this uninvited confidence? What is it—a desire to be original, or simply affectation, or pride? Most likely pride. She can't put up with the smallest suspicion . . . She can't endure the idea that

any one should judge her falsely. A strange girl!'

So mused Nezhdanov; and on the terrace below there was a conversation about him; and he heard it all very clearly.

'I know by instinct,' Kallomyetsev was asserting, 'that that's a red republican. While I was serving on special commission under the governor-general of Moscow, *avec Ladislas*, I got a quick scent for these gentlemen—the reds—and for dissenters too. I've a wonderfully keen nose, at times.' At this point Kallomyetsev described incidentally how he had once, in the environs of Moscow, caught by the heel an old dissenter, whom he had dropped in upon with the police, and who had all but jumped out of his cottage window. . . . 'And there he had been sitting as quiet as could be, till that minute, the rascal!'

Kallomyetsev forgot to add that the same old man, when shut up in prison, had refused all food, and starved himself to death.

'And your new tutor,' continued the zealous *kammerjunker*, 'is a red, not a doubt of it! Have you noticed that he never bows first?'

'And why should he bow first?' observed Madame Sipyagin; 'quite the contrary—I like that in him.'

'I am a guest in the house in which he is

employed,' cried Kallomyetsev—'yes, yes employed for money, *comme un salarié*. . . . Consequently I am his superior, and he *ought* to bow first.'

'You are very exacting, Kallomyetsev,' interposed Sipyagin, with especial stress on the *y* in his name; 'all that, if you'll excuse my saying so, strikes one as rather out of date. I have purchased his services, his work, but he remains a free man.'

'He does not feel the curb,' continued Kallomyetsev, 'the curb, *le frein!* All these reds are like that. I tell you I've a wonderfully sharp nose for them! Ladislas might perhaps compare with me in that respect. If he fell into my hands, that tutor, I'd straighten him up a bit! Wouldn't I make him sit up! He'd sing a very different tune; and shouldn't he touch his hat to me! . . . it would be sweet to see him!'

'Rotten drivel, little blustering idiot!' Nezhdanov was almost shouting from above. . . . But at that instant the door of his room opened, and into it, to the considerable astonishment of Nezhdanov, walked Markelov.

X

NEZHDANOV rose from his place to meet him, while Markelov went straight up to him, and, without a bow or a smile, asked him, 'Was he Alexey Dmitriev Nezhdanov, student of the Petersburg University?'

'Yes . . . certainly,' answered Nezhdanov.

Markelov pulled an open letter out of his side pocket. 'In that case, read this. From Vassily Nikolaevitch,' he added, dropping his voice significantly.

Nezhdanov unfolded and read the letter. It was something of the nature of a half-official circular, in which the bearer, Sergei Markelov, was recommended as one of 'us,' fully deserving of confidence; there followed, further, an exhortation concerning the urgent necessity of concerted action, and the propaganda of certain principles. The circular was addressed to Nezhdanov among others, also as being a trustworthy person.

Nezhdanov held out his hand to Markelov,

asked him to sit down, and himself dropped into a chair. Markelov began, without a word, by lighting a cigarette. Nezhdanov followed his example.

'Have you had time yet to make friends with the peasants here?' Markelov asked at last.

'No; I've not had time yet.'

'You've not been here long, then?'

'I shall soon have been here a fortnight.'

'Been very busy?'

'Not very.'

Markelov coughed grimly.

'H'm! The peasants here are rather a wretched lot,' he resumed; 'an ignorant lot. They want teaching. There's great poverty, but no one to explain to them what their poverty comes from.'

'Those who were your brother-in-law's serfs, as far as I can judge, aren't poor,' remarked Nezhdanov.

'My brother-in-law's a humbug; he knows how to hoodwink people. The peasants about here are no good, certainly; but he has a factory. That's where one must make an effort. One need only stick the spade in there and the whole ant-heap will be on the move directly. Have you any books with you?'

'Yes . . . but not many.'

'I'll let you have some. But how is it you haven't?'

Nezhdanov made no answer. Markelov, too, was silent, and only blew the smoke out of his nostrils.

'What a beast that Kallomyetsev is, though!' he observed suddenly. 'At dinner I was thinking of getting up, going up to that worthy, and pounding that impudent face of his to atoms, for an example to others. But no! There's business of more importance just now than slaying *kammerjunkers*. Now's not the time to lose one's temper with fools for saying stupid things; it's time to prevent them doing stupid things.'

Nezhdanov nodded his head in confirmation, while Markelov again puffed away at his cigarette.

'Here, among all the servants, there's one sensible fellow,' he began again; 'not your servant Ivan . . . he's a dull fish, but another one . . . his name's Kirill, he waits at the sideboard'—(this Kirill had the character of being a sad drunkard)—'you notice him. A drunken brute . . . but we can't afford to be squeamish, you know. And what have you to say of my sister?' he added suddenly, raising his head and fixing his yellow eyes on Nezhdanov. 'She's even more of a humbug than my

brother-in-law. What do you think of her?'

'I think she's a very agreeable and amiable lady . . . and, moreover, she's very beautiful.'

'H'm! With what delicate precision you gentlemen from Petersburg express yourselves! . . . I can only admire it! Well . . . and as regards . . .' he began, but suddenly he scowled, his face darkened, and he did not complete his sentence. 'I see we must talk things over thoroughly,' he began again. 'We can't do it here. Who the devil can tell? They're listening at the door, I dare say. Do you know what I would suggest? To-day's Saturday; to-morrow, I suppose, you won't give my nephew any lessons? Will you?'

'I have a rehearsal of the week's work with him at three to-morrow.'

'A rehearsal! As if you were on the stage! It must be my sister who invents those expressions. Well, it's all the same. Would you care to come to me at once? My place is only eight miles from here. I have good horses: they fly like the wind—you shall stay the night, and spend the morning—and I'll bring you back to-morrow by three o'clock. Do you agree?'

'By all means,' said Nezhdanov. Ever since Markelov's entrance he had been in a state of excitement and embarrassment. His sudden

intimacy with him confused him; at the same time he felt drawn to him. He felt, he realised, that there was before him a person, dull, very likely, but unmistakably honest and strong. And then that strange meeting in the copse, Marianna's unexpected explanation. . . .

'Well, that's capital!' cried Markelov. 'You get ready meanwhile, and I'll go and order the coach to be put to. You needn't ask any questions of the heads of the house here, I hope?'

'I will mention it to them. I imagine I couldn't absent myself without.'

'I'll tell them,' said Markelov. 'Don't you be uneasy. They'll be frowning over their cards now; they won't notice your absence. My brother-in-law aims at becoming a political personage, but all he has to back him is that he plays cards splendidly. After all, though, men have made their fortunes that way! . . . So you get ready. I will make arrangements at once.'

Markelov went away; and an hour later Nezhdanov was sitting beside him on a broad leather cushion, in a wide, roomy, very old, and very comfortable coach; the squat little coachman on the box-seat whistled incessantly a wonderfully sweet bird's note; the three piebald horses, with black plaited manes and tails, galloped swiftly along the even road; and, already swathed in the first shadows of night

(it struck ten just as they started), trees, bushes, fields, plains, and ravines, advancing and retreating again, glided smoothly by.

Markelov's small property (it consisted of about four hundred and fifty acres, and yielded about seven hundred roubles of revenue—it was called Borzyonkovo) was two miles from the provincial town, while Sipyagin's property was six miles from it. To reach Borzyonkovo they had to drive through the town. The new friends had not had time to exchange half a hundred words before they caught glimpses of the wretched little artisans' huts in the outskirts, with tumble-down, wooden roofs, with dim patches of light in the warped windows, and then under their wheels they heard the scrunch of the stone pavements of the town; the coach rocked, swaying from side to side, and, shaken at every jolt, they were carried past the dull stone houses of merchants, with two stories and façades, churches with columns, taverns. . . . It was Saturday night; there were no people in the streets, but the taverns were still crowded. Hoarse voices broke from them, drunken songs, and the nasal notes of the concertina; from doors suddenly opened streamed the filthy, warm, acrid smell of alcohol, the red glare of lights. Before almost every tavern were standing little peasant carts, harnessed to shaggy, pot-bellied

nags; they stood with their unkempt heads hanging down submissively, and seemed asleep; a ragged, unbelted peasant in a big winter cap, which hung in a bag over his neck, would come out of a tavern, and, his breast propped against the shafts, stay motionless, feebly fumbling and moving his hands as though looking for something; or a wasted factory-hand, his cap awry, and his cotton shirt flying open, would take a few irresolute steps, barefoot —his boots having remained in the tavern— stop short, scratch his spine, and, with a sudden groan, go back again.

'The Russian's a slave to drink!' observed Markelov gloomily.

'It's sorrow drives him to it, Sergei Mihalovitch!' pronounced the coachman without turning round. Before each tavern he ceased whistling, and seemed to sink into deep thought.

'Get on! get on!' responded Markelov, with a savage tug at his own coat collar. The coach crossed a wide market-place, positively stinking of rush-mats and cabbage, passed the governor's house with striped sentry-boxes at the gates, a private house with a turret, a promenade set with trees, recently planted and already dying, a bazaar, filled with the barking of dogs and the clanking of chains,

and, gradually reaching the boundaries of the town, and overtaking a long, long train of wagons, which had set off so late for the sake of the cool of the night, again emerged into the fresh air of the open country, on to the high-road planted with willows, and again moved on more smoothly and swiftly.

Markelov—a few words must be said about him—was six years older than his sister, Madame Sipyagin. He had been educated in an artillery school, which he left as an ensign; but just after attaining the rank of a lieutenant he had to retire, through a misunderstanding with the commander—a German. From that time forth he hated Germans, particularly Russian Germans. His resignation embroiled him with his father, whom he scarcely saw again till the day of his death; he inherited the little property from him, and settled in it. In Petersburg he had associated frequently with various intellectual and advanced people, whom he had positively adored; they completely formed his way of thinking. Markelov had read little—and chiefly books relating to the cause—Herzen in especial. He had retained his military habits; he lived like a Spartan and a monk. A few years before he had fallen passionately in love with a girl; but she had jilted him in the most unceremonious fashion,

and had married an adjutant—also a German. Markelov began hating adjutants too. He used to try to write articles on the defects of our artillery, but he had not the slightest faculty of exposition; not a single article could he ever work out to the end, and yet he continued to cover large sheets of grey paper with his sprawling, illegible, childish handwriting. Markelov was a man, obstinate and dauntless to desperation, who could neither forgive nor forget, for ever resenting his own wrongs and the wrongs of all the oppressed, and ready for anything. His limited intellect went for one point only; what he did not understand, for him did not exist; but he scorned and hated treachery and falseness. With people of the higher class, with the 'reacs,' as he expressed it, he was short, and even rude; with the poor he was simple; with a peasant as friendly as with a brother. He managed his estate fairly well; his head was in a whirl of socialistic plans, which he could no more carry out than he could finish his articles on the defects of the artillery. As a rule, he did not succeed—at any time, or in anything; in the regiment he had been nicknamed 'the unsuccessful.' Sincere, upright, a passionate and unhappy nature, he was capable at any moment of appearing merciless, bloodthirsty, of deserving to be called a monster,

and was equally capable of sacrificing himself, without hesitation and without return.

The coach, at the second mile from the town, suddenly plunged into the soft gloom of an aspen wood, with the whisper and rustle of unseen leaves, with the fresh, keen forest fragrance, with vague patches of light overhead and tangled shadows below. The moon had already risen on the horizon, red and broad, like a copper shield. Darting out from under the trees, the coach faced a small manor-house. Three lighted-up windows stood out like shining squares on the face of the low-pitched house, which hid the moon's disc. The gates stood wide open and seemed as though they were never shut. In the courtyard in the half-dark could be seen a high trap with two white, hired horses fastened on behind. Two puppies, also white, ran out from somewhere and gave vent to piercing but not savage barks. People were moving about in the house. The coach rolled up to the steps, and with some difficulty getting out, and feeling with his foot for the iron carriage-step, put, as is usually the case, by the local blacksmith in the most inconvenient position, Markelov said to Nezhdanov: 'Here we are at home; and you will find guests here whom you know very well but don't at all expect to meet. Please come in.'

XI

THESE guests turned out to be our old friends, Ostrodumov and Mashurina. They were both sitting in the small and very poorly furnished drawing-room of Markelov's house, drinking beer and smoking by the light of a kerosene lamp. They were not surprised at Nezhdanov's arrival; they knew Markelov intended to bring him with him; but Nezhdanov was much surprised at seeing them. When he came in, Ostrodumov observed, 'How are you, brother?' and that was all. Mashurina first turned crimson all over, then held out her hand. Markelov explained to Nezhdanov that Ostrodumov and Mashurina had been sent down 'on the cause,' which was bound shortly now to take practical shape; that they had come from Petersburg a week ago; that Ostrodumov was remaining in S—— province for propaganda purposes, while Mashurina was going to K—— to see a certain person there.

Markelov suddenly grew hot, though no one

had contradicted him. He gnawed his moustache, and with flashing eyes began to speak in a hoarse, agitated, but distinct voice of hideous acts of injustice that had been committed, of the necessity for immediate action, maintaining that practically everything was ready, and none but cowards could procrastinate; that some violence was as essential as the lancet's prick to the abscess, however ready to break the abscess might be! He repeated this simile of the lancet several times; it obviously pleased him; he had not invented it, but had read it in some book. It seemed that, having lost all hope of Marianna's reciprocating his feelings, he felt he had nothing now to lose, and only thought how to set to work as soon as might be 'for the cause.' His words came like the blows of an axe, with absolute directness, sharply, simply, and vindictively; monotonous and weighty, they fell one after another from his blanched lips, recalling the sharp, abrupt bark of a grim old watch-dog. He said he knew the peasants of the neighbourhood and the factory hands well, and that there were capable people among them —Eremey of Goloplyok, for instance — who would be ready for anything you like any minute. The name of Eremey from the village of Goloplyok was constantly on his tongue. At

every tenth word he struck the table with his right hand, not with the palm, but with the edge of his hand, while he thrust his left into the air, with the first finger held apart from the rest; and those hairy, sinewy hands, that finger, the droning voice, and the blazing eyes, produced a powerful impression. On the road Markelov had said little to Nezhdanov; his anger had been rising . . . but now it broke out. Mashurina and Ostrodumov applauded him with a smile, a glance, sometimes a brief exclamation, but in Nezhdanov something strange was taking place. First he tried to reply; he referred to the harm done by haste, by premature, ill-considered action; above all, he was surprised to find it all so decided, that no doubt was felt, and no consciousness of the necessity of examining into the circumstances of the place, nor even of trying to find out precisely what the people wanted. . . . But afterwards his nerves were wrought upon and quivering like harp-strings, and in a sort of desperation, almost with tears of rage in his eyes, his voice breaking into a scream, he began speaking in the same spirit as Markelov, going further even than he had done. What impulse was working in him it would be hard to say. Was it remorse for having been, as it were, lukewarm of late? was it vexation with himself or with others, or the longing to

stifle some worm gnawing within? or indeed was it a desire to show off before the comrades he was meeting again? . . . or had Markelov's words really influenced him—fired his blood? Till the very dawn the conversation continued; Ostrodumov and Mashurina did not stir from their seat, while Markelov and Nezhdanov did not sit down. Markelov stood on the same spot, for all the world like a sentinel, while Nezhdanov kept walking up and down the room with unequal steps, now slowly, now hurriedly. They talked of the measures and means to be employed, of the part each ought to take on himself; they examined and tied up in parcels various tracts and leaflets; they referred to a merchant, a dissenter, one Golushkin, a very trustworthy though uneducated man; to the young propagandist, Kislyakov, who was, they said, very able, though over hasty, and had too high an opinion of his own talents; the name of Solomin, too, was mentioned. . . .

'Is that the man who manages a cotton factory?' inquired Nezhdanov, remembering what had been said of him at the Sipyagins' table.

'Yes, that is he,' answered Markelov; 'you must get to know him. We have not tested him thoroughly yet, but he's a capable, very capable, fellow.'

Eremey of Goloplyok again figured in the

conversation; to him were added the Sipyagins Kirill and a certain Mendeley, also nicknamed the Sulker; only it was difficult to reckon on the Sulker—he was bold as a lion when sober, but a coward when he was drunk, and he almost always was drunk.

'And your own people, now,' Nezhdanov inquired of Markelov, 'are there any you can rely on?'

Markelov replied that there were some. He did not mention one of them by name, however, but went off into a discourse upon the artisans of the towns and the seminarists, who would be the more useful from their great bodily strength, and, if only it came to fighting with fists, would do great things! Nezhdanov made inquiries about the nobility. Markelov answered that there were five or six young noblemen; one of them, to be sure, was a German, and he the most radical of the lot, but, of course, there was no reckoning on a German . . . he might turn sulky or betray them any moment. But there, they must wait to see what news Kislyakov would send them. Nezhdanov inquired too about the army. At that Markelov hesitated, tugged at his long whiskers, and explained at last that there was nothing, so far, decisive. . . . Perhaps Kislyakov would have something to disclose.

'And who is this Kislyakov?' cried Nezhdanov impatiently.

Markelov smiled significantly, and said that he was a man . . . such a man. . . .

'I know him very little, though,' he added; 'I have only seen him twice altogether. But the letters that man writes!—such letters!! I will show you them. . . . You will be astonished. Such fire! And his activity! Five or six times he has raced right across Russia and back . . . and from every station a letter of ten—twelve pages!'

Nezhdanov looked inquiringly at Ostrodumov, but he sat like a statue, not an eyebrow twitching, while Mashurina's lips were compressed in a bitter smile, but she, too, was dumb as a fish. Nezhdanov tried to question Markelov about his reforms in a socialistic direction on his estate . . . but at this Ostrodumov interposed.

'What's the good of discussing that now?' he observed. 'It makes no difference; everything must be transformed afterwards.'

The conversation turned again into a political channel. Nezhdanov was still devoured by a secret worm gnawing within; but the keener the inward torture, the more loudly and positively he spoke. He had drunk only one glass of beer, but from time to time it struck

him that he was completely drunk; his head was in a whirl, and his heart throbbed painfully. When at last, at four o'clock in the morning, the discussion ceased, and, stepping over a little page asleep in the anteroom, they separated and went to their respective rooms, Nezhdanov, before he lay down, stood a long time motionless, his eyes fixed on the floor before him. He mused upon the continual, heartrending note of bitterness in all Markelov had uttered. The man's pride could not but be wounded; he was bound to be suffering, his hopes of personal happiness were shattered, and yet how he forgot himself —how utterly he gave himself up to what he held for the truth! 'A limited nature,' was Nezhdanov's thought. . . . 'But isn't it a hundred times better to be such a limited nature than such... such as I, for instance, feel myself to be?

But at once he struggled against his own self-depreciation.

'Why so? Am not I, too, capable of sacrificing myself? Wait a bit, my friends. . . . And you, Paklin, shall be convinced in time that though I am an æsthetic, though I do write verses . . .'

He pushed his hair back angrily, ground his teeth, and, hurriedly pulling off his clothes, flung himself into the damp, chill bed.

'Sleep well!' Mashurina's voice called through the door. 'I am next door to you.'

'Good-night,' answered Nezhdanov, and then it came into his mind that she had not taken her eyes off him all the evening.

'What does she want?' he muttered, and at once felt ashamed of himself. 'Ah, to sleep as soon as maybe!'

But it was hard to master his overwrought nerves . . . and the sun stood high in the sky when at last he fell into a heavy, comfortless sleep.

The next morning he got up late with a headache. He dressed, went to the window of his attic room, and saw that Markelov had practically no farm at all. His little box of a house stood on a ravine not far from a wood. A little granary, a stable, a cellar, a little hut with a half tumble-down thatch-roof, on one side; on the other, a diminutive lake, a patch of kitchen garden, a hemp-field, another little hut with a similar roof; in the distance an outhouse, a barn, and an empty thrashing-floor — this was all the wealth that could be seen. It all seemed poor, decaying, and not exactly neglected or run wild, but as though it had never thrived, like a tree that has not taken root well. Nezhdanov went downstairs. Mashurina was sitting

behind the tea-urn in the dining-room, evidently waiting for him. He learned from her that Ostrodumov had gone off, on the cause, and would not be back for a fortnight; and Markelov had gone to see after his labourers. As May was drawing to a close and there was no pressing work to be done, Markelov had a plan for felling a small birch copse without outside help, and had set off there early in the morning.

Nezhdanov felt a strange weariness at heart. So much had been said overnight of the impossibility of delaying longer, it had so often been repeated that the only thing left to do was 'to act.' But how act? in what direction, and how without delay? It was useless to question Mashurina; she knew no hesitation, she had no doubts as to what she had to do; it was to go to K——. Beyond that she did not look. Nezhdanov did not know what to say to her; and after drinking some tea, he put on his cap and went off in the direction of the birch copse. On the way he fell in with some peasants carting manure, formerly serfs of Markelov's. He began to talk to them . . . but did not get much out of them. They too seemed weary, but with an ordinary physical weariness, not at all like the feeling he was experiencing. Their former master, accord-

ing to them, was a good-natured, simple gentleman, but queerish; they predicted his ruin, because 'he didn't understand how things should be done, and wanted to do things his own way, not as his fathers did before. And he's too wise, too—you can't make him out, do what you will; but a good-hearted gentleman, if ever there was one.' Nezhdanov went on further and came upon Markelov himself.

He was walking surrounded by a whole crowd of workmen; from a distance it could be seen that he was talking and explaining something to them; then he gave a despairing wave of the hand, as though he gave it up! Beside him was his bailiff, a dull-eyed young man, with no trace of authority in his bearing. This bailiff continually repeated, 'That shall be as you please, sir,' to the intense annoyance of his master, who looked for more independence from him. Nezhdanov went up to Markelov, and on his face he saw traces of the same spiritual weariness he was feeling himself. They exchanged greetings; Markelov began speaking at once, briefly though, of the questions discussed overnight, of the impending revolution; but the expression of weariness did not leave his face. He was all over dust and perspiration; shavings of wood, green strands of moss were clinging to his clothes;

his voice was hoarse. . . . The men standing round him were silent; they were half scared, half amused. . . . Nezhdanov looked at Markelov, and Ostrodumov's words re-echoed again in his head: 'What's the good? It makes no difference, it will all have to be transformed afterwards!' One labourer who had been in fault somehow began entreating Markelov to let him off the fine for his mistake. . . Markelov at first flew into a rage, and shouted furiously at him, but afterwards he forgave him. . . . 'It makes no difference . . . it will all have to be changed later on. . . .' Nezhdanov asked him for horses and a conveyance to return home; Markelov seemed surprised at his wish, but answered that everything should be ready directly.

He went back to the house with Nezhdanov. . . He was staggering as he walked, from exhaustion.

'What's the matter with you?' asked Nezhdanov.

'I am worn out!' said Markelov savagely. 'However you talk to these people, they can't understand anything, and they won't carry out instructions. . . . They positively don't understand Russian. The word "part" they know well enough . . . but "participation." . . . What is participation? They can't under-

stand. And yet it's a Russian word, too, damn it! They imagine I want to make them a present of part of the land!' Markelov had conceived the idea of explaining to the peasants the principles of co-operation, and introducing it on his estate, but they resisted. One of them had gone so far as to say in this connection, 'There was a pit deep enough before, but now there's no seeing the bottom of it' . . . while the other peasants had with one accord given vent to a profound sigh which had crushed Markelov utterly.

On reaching the house he dismissed his attendant retinue, and began to see about the carriage and horses, and about lunch. His household consisted only of a little page, a cook, a coachman, and a very aged man with hairy ears, in a long-skirted cotton coat, who had been his grandfather's valet. This old man was for ever gazing with profound dejection at his master; he did nothing, however, and was scarcely perhaps fit to do anything; but he was always there, crouched up on the doorsill.

After a lunch of hard-boiled eggs, anchovies, and cold hash—the page handed the mustard in an old pomatum pot and vinegar in an eau-de-cologne bottle—Nezhdanov took his seat in the same coach in which he had come overnight; but instead of three horses they only

harnessed two; the third had been shod and lamed. During lunch Markelov had said little, eaten nothing, and had drawn his breath painfully. . . . He had uttered two or three bitter words about his property, and again waved his hand as though to say . . . 'It makes no difference, it will all have to be changed afterwards.' Mashurina asked Nezhdanov to take her as far as the town; she wanted to go there to do some shopping. 'I can walk back, or else get a lift in some peasant's cart.' Markelov escorted them both to the steps, and said vaguely that he should shortly come for Nezhdanov again; and then . . . then'—(he shook himself and plucked up his spirits again)—'they must come to a definite arrangement; that Solomin should come too; that he, Markelov, was only waiting for news from Vassily Nikolaevitch, and then it only remained to 'act' promptly—since the peasants (the same peasants who did not understand the word 'participation') would not consent to wait longer!

'Oh, you were going to show me the letters of that—what's his name—Kislyakov?' said Nezhdanov.

'Later . . .' Markelov replied hurriedly. . . . 'Then we will do everything—altogether.'

The carriage started.

'Be in readiness!' Markelov's voice was

heard for the last time. He was standing on the steps, and beside him, with the same unchanged dejection on his face, straightening his bent back, clasping his hands behind him, diffusing an odour of ryebread and cotton fustian, and hearing nothing, stood the model servant, the decrepit old valet.

All the way to the town Mashurina was silent; she only smoked a cigarette. As they drew near the barrier she suddenly gave a loud sigh.

'I 'm sorry for Sergei Mihalovitch,' she observed, and her face darkened.

'He 's quite knocked up with worry,' remarked Nezhdanov; 'I think his land 's in a poor way.'

'That 's not why I 'm sorry for him.'

'Why, then?'

He 's an unhappy man, unlucky! Where could one find a better fellow? But no—no one wants him anywhere.'

Nezhdanov looked at his companion.

'Do you know something about him, then?'

'I know nothing . . . but one sees it for oneself. Good-bye, Alexey Dmitritch.'

Mashurina got out of the coach, and an hour later Nezhdanov was driving into the courtyard of the Sipyagins' house. He did not feel very well. . . . He had spent a night without

sleep . . . and then all the discussions . . . the talk. . . .

A beautiful face peeped out of a window and smiled graciously to him. . . . It was Madame Sipyagin welcoming him on his return.

'What eyes she has!' was his thought.

XII

A GREAT many people had come to dinner, and after dinner Nezhdanov profited by the general bustle to slip away to his own room. He wanted to be by himself if only to review the impressions he carried away from his expedition. At table Valentina Mihalovna had looked at him several times attentively, but apparently had not got a chance of speaking to him; Marianna, since that unexpected avowal which had so astounded him, seemed ashamed of herself and avoided him. Nezhdanov took up a pen; he felt a desire to converse on paper with his friend Silin; but he could not think what to say even to his friend; or perhaps, so many contradictory thoughts and sensations were clashing together in his head that he did not attempt to disentangle them, and put it all off to another day. Among the party at dinner had been Mr. Kallomyetsev too; never had he shown more arrogance and gentlemanly superciliousness; but his free and easy remarks had

had no effect on Nezhdanov: he did not notice them. He seemed shut in by a sort of cloud; it stood like a veil of half-darkness between him and the rest of the world—and, strange to say, across this veil he could discern only three faces, and all three women's faces, and all three had their eyes persistently fastened upon him. They were: Madame Sipyagin, Mashurina, and Marianna. What did it mean? And why precisely these three? What had they in common? And what did they want with him?

He went early to bed, but could not get to sleep. He was haunted by thoughts, gloomy, though not exactly painful . . . thoughts of the inevitable end, of death. They were familiar thoughts. For long he was turning them this way and that, at one time shuddering at the probability of annihilation, then welcoming it, almost rejoicing in it. He felt at last the peculiar excitement he knew so well. . . . He got up, sat down to his writing-table, and, after thinking a little, almost without correction, wrote the following verses in his secret book:

'My dear one, when I come
To die—this is my will:
Heap up and burn my writings all,
That they may die in the same hour!
With flowers then deck me all about
And let the sun shine in my room;
Musicians place about my doors,

And let them play no mournful dirge!
But as in hours of revelry,
Let the gay fiddles shrilly twang
A rollicking, seductive waltz!
Then, as upon my dying ear
That reckless music dies away,
I too would die, dropping asleep,
And mar not with a useless moan
The peace that comes with coming death.
I 'd pass away to other worlds,
Rocked to my sleep by the light strains
Of the light pleasures of our earth!'

When he wrote the words 'my dear one,' he was thinking of Silin. He declaimed his verses in an undertone to himself, and was surprised at what had come from his pen. This scepticism, this indifference, this light-minded lack of faith, how did it all agree with his principles? with what he had said at Markelov's? He flung the book in the table-drawer, and went back to his bed. But he only fell asleep at dawn when the first larks were trilling in the paling sky.

The next day he had just finished his lesson, and was sitting in the billiard-room. Madame Sipyagin came in, looked round, and, going up to him with a smile, asked him to come to her room. She was wearing a light barege dress, very simple, and very charming; the sleeves ended in a frill at the elbow; a wide ribbon clasped her waist, her hair fell in thick curls on

her neck. Everything about her seemed overflowing with kindness and sympathetic tenderness, a restrained, emboldening tenderness—everything: the subdued brilliance of her half-closed eyes, the soft languor of her voice, her gestures, her very gait. Madame Sipyagin conducted Nezhdanov to her boudoir, a bright, charming room, filled with the scent of flowers and perfumes, the pure freshness of a woman's garments, a woman's constant presence; she made him sit down in an easy-chair, seated herself near him, and began to question him about his journey, about Markelov's doings, with such tact, such gentleness, such sweetness! She showed sincere interest in her brother, whom, till then, she had not once mentioned in Nezhdanov's hearing; from some of her words it could be gathered that the feeling Marianna had inspired in him had not escaped her; her tone was slightly mournful . . whether because his feeling was not reciprocated by Marianna, or because her brother's choice had fallen on a girl he really knew nothing of, was left undefined. But what was principally clear: she was obviously trying to win Nezhdanov, to arouse his confidence in her, to make him cease to be shy. Valentina Mihalovna went so far as to reproach him a little for having a false idea of her.

Nezhdanov listened to her, looked at her arms and her shoulders, at times glanced at her rosy lips, the faintly waving coils of her hair. At first his answers were very short; he felt a slight tightening in his throat and his chest . . . but gradually this sensation was replaced by another, disturbing enough too, but not devoid of a certain sweetness: he had never expected such a distinguished and beautiful lady, such an aristocrat, would be capable of taking an interest in him, a mere student; and she was not simply taking an interest in him, she seemed to be flirting a little with him. Nezhdanov asked himself why she was doing all this? and he found no answer; nor, indeed, was he very anxious to find one. Madame Sipyagin talked of Kolya; she even began by assuring Nezhdanov that it was simply with the object of talking seriously about her son, to learn his views on the education of Russian children in general, that she wished to get to know him better. The suddenness with which this wish had sprung up might have struck any one as curious. But the root of the matter did not lie in what Valentina Mihalovna had just said, but in the fact that she had been overtaken by something like a wave of sensuality; a craving to conquer, to bring to her feet this stubborn creature, had asserted itself. . . .

But at this point we must go back a little. Valentina Mihalovna was the daughter of a very stupid and unenergetic general, with only one star and a buckle to show for fifty years' service, and a very shy and intriguing Little Russian, endowed, like many of her countrywomen, with an exceedingly simple, and even foolish, exterior, from which she knew how to extract the maximum of advantage. Valentina Mihalovna's parents were not well-to-do people; she got into the Smolny Convent, however, and there, though she was regarded as a republican, she stood high in favour because she studied industriously, and behaved sedately. On leaving the Smolny Convent, she lived with her mother (her brother had gone into the country, her father, the general with the star and the buckle, was dead) in a clean, but very chilly flat; when people talked in their rooms, the breath could be seen coming in steam from their mouths; Valentina Mihalovna used to laugh and declare it was 'like being in church.' She was plucky in bearing all the discomforts of a poor, cramped style of living: she had a wonderfully good temper. With her mother's aid, she succeeded in keeping up and forming acquaintances and connections: every one talked about her, even in the highest circles, as a very charming, very cultivated girl, of the very best

breeding. Valentina Mihalovna had several suitors; she had picked out Sipyagin from all the rest, and had very simply, rapidly, and adroitly made him in love with her. . . . Though, indeed, he soon recognised himself that a better wife for him could not have been found. She was clever, not ill-natured . . . rather goodnatured of the two, fundamentally cold and indifferent . . . and she could not tolerate the thought of any one remaining indifferent to her. Valentina Mihalovna was full of that special charm which is peculiar to attractive egoists; in that charm there is no poetry nor true sensibility, but there is softness, there is sympathy, there is even tenderness. Only, these charming egoists must not be thwarted: they are fond of power, and will not tolerate independence in others. Women like Sipyagina excite and work upon inexperienced and passionate natures; for themselves they like regularity and a peaceful life. Virtue comes easy to them, they are inwardly unmoved, but the constant desire to sway, to attract, and to please, lends them mobility and brilliance: their will is strong, and their very fascination often depends on this strength of will. Hard it is for a man to hold his ground when for an instant gleams of secret softness pass unconsciously, as it seems, over a bright, pure creature like this; he waits, expecting that the time is come, and

now the ice will melt; but the clear ice only reflects the play of the light, it does not melt, and never will he see its brightness troubled!

Flirtation cost Sipyagina little; she was well aware that there was no danger for her, and never could be. And meantime, to make another's eyes grow dim and then sparkle again, to set another's cheeks flushing with desire and dread, another's voice quivering and breaking, to trouble another soul—oh, how sweet that was to her soul! How pleasant it was late at night, as she lay down to untroubled slumbers in her pure, fresh nest, to recall those restless words and looks and sighs! With what a happy smile she retired into herself, into the consciousness of her inaccessibility, her impregnable virtue, and with what gracious condescension she submitted to the lawful embraces of her well-bred spouse! Such reflections were so soothing that she was often positively touched and ready to do some deed of mercy, to succour a fellow-creature.... Once she had founded a tiny almshouse after a secretary of legation, madly in love with her, had tried to cut his throat! She had prayed most sincerely for him, though the sentiment of religion had been feeble in her from her earliest years.

And so she talked to Nezhdanov, and tried in every way to bring him to her feet. She

admitted him to her confidence, she, as it were, revealed herself to him, and with sweet curiosity, with half-maternal tenderness, watched this very nice-looking, interesting, and severe young radical slowly and awkwardly beginning to respond to her. In a day, an hour, a minute—all this would disappear, leaving no trace; but meanwhile she found it pleasant, rather amusing, rather pathetic, and even rather touching. Forgetting his origin, and knowing how such interest is appreciated by people who are lonely and among strangers, Valentina Mihalovna began questioning Nezhdanov about his youth, his family. . . . But guessing instantly by his confused and short replies that she had made a blunder, Valentina Mihalovna tried to smooth over her mistake, and opened her heart even more ingenuously to him. . . . As in the languid heat of noonday a full-blown rose opens its fragrant petals, which are soon folded up close again by the bracing coolness of night.

She did not succeed, however, in fully effacing her mistake. Nezhdanov, touched on a sore spot, could not feel confiding as before. The bitter feeling he had always with him, always rankling at the bottom of his heart, was astir again; his democratic suspicion and self-reproach were awakened. 'This wasn't what I came here for,' he thought; Paklin's

sarcastic advice recurred to him . . . and he took advantage of the first instant of silence to get up, make a curt bow, and go out 'looking very foolish,' as he could not help whispering to himself.

His embarrassment did not escape Valentina Mihalovna . . . but to judge from the little smile with which she watched him go out, she interpreted this embarrassment in a manner flattering to herself.

In the billiard-room Nezhdanov came upon Marianna. She was standing with her back to the window, not far from the door of the boudoir, her hands clasped tightly. Her face happened to be in almost black shadow; but her fearless eyes were looking so inquiringly, so fixedly at Nezhdanov, such scorn, such insulting pity were visible on her tightly closed lips, that he stood still in perplexity. . . .

'You have something to say to me?' he said involuntarily.

Marianna did not at once answer. 'No . . . or rather yes; I have. But not now.'

'When, then?'

'Wait a little. Perhaps—to-morrow; perhaps —never. You see, I know very little—of what you are really like.'

'Still,' began Nezhdanov, 'it has sometimes struck me . . . that we have——'

'And you don't know me at all,' Marianna interrupted. 'But there, wait a little. To-morrow, perhaps. Now I have to go to my . mistress. Good-bye till to-morrow.'

Nezhdanov took two steps forward, but suddenly turned back. 'Oh, by the way, Marianna Vikentyevna . . . I have been continually meaning to ask you: won't you let me go to the school with you—to see what you do there—before it's shut?'

'Certainly. . . . But it's not of the school that I wanted to talk to you.'

'What, then?'

'To-morrow,' repeated Marianna.

But she did not put it off till the next day; a conversation between her and Nezhdanov took place the same evening in one of the avenues of limes, not far from the terrace.

XIII

SHE went up to him first.

'Mr. Nezhdanov,' she began in a hurried voice, 'you are, I fancy, completely fascinated by Valentina Mihalovna?'

She turned without waiting for an answer, and walked along the avenue; and he walked beside her.

'What makes you think that?' he asked after a brief pause.

'Isn't it so? If not, she has played her cards badly to-day. I can fancy how carefully she has been at work, how she has laid her little nets.'

Nezhdanov uttered not a word; he only stared from one side at his strange companion.

'Listen,' she continued; 'I'm not going to pretend; I don't like Valentina Mihalovna—and you know that well enough. I may strike you as unjust . . . but you should first consider . . .'

Marianna's voice broke. She was flushed

and moved. . . . Emotion with her almost always took the form of seeming angry. 'You are probably asking yourself,' she began again, 'why is this young lady telling me all this? You must have thought the same, I suppose, when I told you something . . . about Mr. Markelov?'

She suddenly stooped down, picked a small mushroom, broke it in half and flung it away.

'You are wrong, Marianna Vikentyevna,' observed Nezhdanov; 'on the contrary, I thought I had inspired you with confidence—and that idea was a very pleasant one.'

Nezhdanov was not telling quite the truth; this idea had only just entered his head.

Marianna glanced at him instantly. Up till then she had looked away persistently.

'It's not so much that you inspire confidence,' she said as though reflecting; 'you are completely a stranger, you see. But your position—and mine—are very much alike. We are both alike unhappy; that's a bond between us.'

'Are you unhappy?' inquired Nezhdanov.

'And you—aren't you?' answered Marianna.

He said nothing.

'Do you know my story?' she began quickly; 'the story of my father? his exile?—no? well, then, let me tell you that he was brought up,

tried, found guilty, deprived of his rank . . . and everything—and sent to Siberia. Then he died . . . my mother died too. My uncle, Mr. Sipyagin, my mother's brother, took care of me; I live at his expense; he's my benefactor and Valentina Mihalovna's my benefactress—and I repay them with the blackest ingratitude, because, I suppose, I have a hard heart—and the bread of charity is bitter—and I'm not good at bearing insulting condescension—and I can't put up with patronage . . . and I'm not good at hiding things; and when I'm for ever being hurt with little pin-pricks, I only keep from crying out because I'm too proud.'

As she uttered these disconnected sentences, Marianna walked more and more rapidly. All at once she stood still.

'Do you know that my aunt—simply to get me off her hands—means to marry me . . . to that loathsome Kallomyetsev? Of course she knows my ideas—why, in her eyes, I'm a Nihilist!—while he, I'm not attractive to him, of course—I'm not pretty, you see; but I might be sold. That would be another act of charity, you know.'

'Why then didn't you . . .' Nezhdanov began, and he hesitated.

Marianna glanced at him for a moment. 'Why didn't I accept Mr. Markelov's offer, dc

you mean? Isn't that it? Well, but what could I do? He's a good man. But it's not my fault; I don't love him.'

Marianna again walked on in front as though she wished to save her companion from any obligation to reply to this unexpected confession.

They both reached the end of the avenue. Marianna turned quickly into a narrow path that ran through the densely planted firs, and walked along it. Nezhdanov followed Marianna. He was conscious of a twofold perplexity; it was amazing that this shy girl could suddenly be so open with him, and he wondered still more that her openness did not strike him as strange, that he felt it natural.

Marianna turned round suddenly and stood still in the middle of the path, so that it came to pass that her face was about a yard from Nezhdanov's and her eyes were fixed straight upon his.

'Alexey Dmitritch,' she said, 'don't suppose my aunt is ill-natured. . . . No! she is all deceit, she's an actress, she poses, she wants every one to adore her as a beauty, and to worship her as a saint! She makes a sympathetic phrase, says it to one person, and then repeats the phrase to a second and a third, and always with the same air of only just having

thought of it, and that's just when she uses her wonderful eyes! She understands herself very well; she knows she's like a Madonna, and she cares for no one! She pretends she's always worrying over Kolya, but all she does is to talk about him with intellectual people. She wishes no harm to any one. . . . She's all benevolence! But they may break every bone in your body in her presence . . . it's nothing to her! She wouldn't stir a finger to save you; while if it were necessary or useful to her . . . then . . . oh, then!'

Marianna ceased; her wrath was choking her. She resolved to give it vent—she could not restrain herself; but speech failed her in spite of herself. Marianna belonged to a special class of unhappy persons (in Russia one may come across them pretty often). . . . Justice satisfies but does not rejoice them, while injustice, which they are terribly keen in detecting, revolts them to the very depths of their being. While she was talking, Nezhdanov was looking at her intently; her flushed face, with her short hair slightly dishevelled, and the tremulous twitching of her thin lips, impressed him as menacing, and significant, and beautiful. The sunlight, broken up by the thick network of twigs, fell on her brow in a slanting patch of gold, and this tongue of fire seemed in keeping

with the excited expression of her whole face, her wide-open, fixed, and flashing eyes, the thrilling sound of her voice.

'Tell me,' Nezhdanov asked her at last, 'why did you call me unhappy? Is it possible you know about my past?'

Marianna nodded her head.

'Yes.'

'That is . . . how did you know of it? Some one talked to you about me?'

'I know . . . your origin.'

'You know. . . . Who told you?'

'Why, the very Valentina Mihalovna whom you're so fascinated by! She didn't fail to mention in my presence, passing over it lightly, as her way is, but plainly—not with sympathy, but as a liberal who is superior to all prejudices—that there was, to be sure, a fact of interest in the life of our new tutor! Don't be surprised, please: Valentina Mihalovna, in the same incidental way, and with commiseration, informs almost every visitor that there is, to be sure, in her niece's life a . . . fact of interest: her father was sent to Siberia for embezzlement! She may fancy herself an aristocrat—she's simply backbiting and posing, your Sistine Madonna!'

'Excuse me,' remarked Nezhdanov, 'why is she "mine"?'

Marianna turned away, and again walked along the path.

'You had such a long conversation with her,' she uttered thickly.

'I hardly said a single word,' answered Nezhdanov; 'she was talking all the while alone.'

Marianna walked on in silence; but at this point the path turned aside, the pines, as it were, made way, and a small lawn stretched before them, with a hollow weeping birch in the middle and a round seat encircling the trunk of the old tree. Marianna sat down on this seat; Nezhdanov placed himself beside her; the long hanging branches, covered with tiny green leaves, swayed above both their heads. Around them lilies-of-the-valley peeped out white in the fine grass, and from the whole clearing rose the fresh scent of the young herbage, sweetly refreshing after the oppressive resinous odour of the pines.

'You want to come with me to look at the school here,' began Marianna. 'Well, then, let us go. . . . Only . . . I don't know. It will not be much pleasure to you. You've heard—our principal teacher is the deacon. He's a good-natured man, but you can't imagine what he talks about to his pupils! There is one boy among them. . . . His name is Garasei. He's an orphan,

ten years old, and fancy, he learns faster than any of them!'

In suddenly changing the subject of conversation, Marianna herself seemed transformed. She grew rather pale and quiet . . . and her face expressed confusion, as though she began to be ashamed of all she had been saying. She apparently wanted to get Nezhdanov upon a question of some sort—the schools or the peasantry—anything, if only they might not continue in the same tone as before. But at that minute he was in no humour for 'questions.'

'Marianna Vikentyevna,' he began, 'I will speak to you openly. I did not at all anticipate all that . . . has just passed between us.' (At the word 'passed' she turned away a little.) 'I think we have suddenly become very . . . very intimate. And it was bound to be so. We have long been getting closer to one another, but we did not put it into words. And so I, too, will speak to you without reserve. You are wretched and miserable in this house, but your uncle, though he's limited, still, so far as I can judge, he's a humane man, isn't he? Won't he understand your position and stand by you?'

'My uncle? To begin with, he's not a man at all: he's an official—a senator or a minister . . . I don't know. And secondly . . . I

don't want to complain and slander people for nothing. I 'm not wretched at all here; that's to say, I 'm not oppressed in any way; my aunt's tiny pin-pricks are really nothing to me. . . . I 'm absolutely free.'

Nezhdanov looked in bewilderment at Marianna.

'In that case . . . all you told me just now . . .'

'You are at liberty to laugh at me,' she said quickly; 'but if I am unhappy—it's not for my own unhappiness. It sometimes seems to me that I suffer for all the oppressed, the poor, the wretched in Russia. . . . No, I don't suffer, but I am indignant—I am in revolt for them . . . that I 'm ready for them . . . to lay down my life. I am unhappy because I 'm a young lady—a hanger-on, because I can do nothing—am fit for nothing! When my father was in Siberia, while I was left with mother in Moscow—ah! how I longed to go to him! not that I had any great love or respect for him—but I so much wanted to know for myself, to see with my own eyes, how convicts and how prisoners live. . . . And what disgust I felt for myself and all those easy-going, prosperous, well-fed people! . . . And afterwards, when he came back, broken down, crushed, and began humiliating himself, fretting and trying to get

on . . . ah, . . . that was hard! How well he did to die . . . and mother, too! But, you see, I was left behind. . . . For what? To feel that I've a bad nature, that I'm ungrateful, that nothing is right with me, and that I can do nothing—nothing for anything or anybody!'

Marianna turned away. Her hand had slid on to the garden seat. Nezhdanov felt very sorry for her; he stroked the hand . . . but Marianna at once pulled it away, not because Nezhdanov's action struck her as unsuitable, but that he might not—God forbid!—imagine she was asking for his sympathy.

Through the branches of the pines there was a glimpse of a woman's dress.

Marianna drew herself up. 'Look, your Madonna has sent her spy out. That maid has to keep watch on me and report to her mistress where I am and with whom. My aunt most likely supposed that I was with you, and thinks it improper, especially after the sentimental scene she has been rehearsing with you. And, indeed, it's time to go back. Come along.'

Marianna got up; Nezhdanov, too, rose from his seat. She glanced at him over her shoulder, and suddenly there passed over her face an expression almost childish, charming, a little embarrassed.

'You're not angry with me? You don't think I, too, have been showing off to you? No, you don't think that,' she went on, before Nezhdanov could answer her in any way. 'You see, you are, like me, unhappy, and your nature, too, is . . . bad, like mine. To-morrow we will go to the school together, for we are friends now, you know.'

As Marianna and Nezhdanov approached the house, Valentina Mihalovna watched them with a spy-glass from the balcony, and with her usual sweet smile she slowly shook her head; then returning through the open glass door into the drawing-room, where Sipyagin was already seated at preference with the toothless neighbour, who had dropped in for tea, she observed in a loud, drawling tone, each syllable distinct: 'How damp the night air is! it's dangerous!'

Marianna glanced at Nezhdanov, while Sipyagin, who had just taken a point from his partner, cast a truly ministerial glance, sidelong and upwards, upon his wife, and then transferred this same cool, sleepy, but penetrating look to the young couple coming in from the dark garden.

XIV

A FORTNIGHT more passed. Everything went its accustomed way. Sipyagin arranged the duties of the day, if not like a minister, at least like the director of a department, and maintained the same lofty, humane, and somewhat fastidious deportment; Kolya had his lessons; Anna Zaharovna fretted in continual, suppressed anger; visitors came, talked, skirmished at cards, and apparently were not bored; Valentina Mihalovna continued to amuse herself with Nezhdanov, though a shade of something like good-natured irony was blended with her amenities. With Marianna, Nezhdanov grew unmistakably intimate, and to his surprise found that her temper was even enough, and that he could talk to her about anything without coming into violent opposition. In her company he twice visited the school, though at his first visit he was convinced that he could do nothing there. The reverend deacon was in full possession of it with Sipyagin's consent,

and, indeed, by his wish. The worthy father taught reading and writing fairly, though on an old-fashioned method; but at examinations he propounded questions decidedly ridiculous; for instance, he one day asked Garasei, 'How would he explain the expression, "the waters in the firmament"?' to which Garasei, by the instruction of the same worthy father, was to reply, 'That is inexplicable.'

Moreover, the school, such as it was, was closed soon after—for the summer months—till autumn. Remembering the exhortation of Paklin and of others, Nezhdanov tried, too, to make friends with the peasants; but soon he realised that he was simply, so far as his powers of observation enabled him, studying them, not doing propaganda work at all. He had spent almost the whole of his life in town, and between him and the country people there was a gulf over which he could not cross. Nezhdanov succeeded in exchanging a few words with the drunkard Kirill, and even with Mendeley; but, strange to say, he was, as it were, afraid of them, and, except some very brief abuse of things in general, he got nothing out of them. Another peasant, called Fityuev, nonplussed him utterly. This peasant had a face of exceptional energy, almost that of some brigand chief. . . . 'Come, he's sure to be some

use,' Nezhdanov thought. . . . But Fityuev turned out to be a wretched outcast; the mir had taken his land away from him, because he —a healthy and positively powerful man—*could not* work.

'I can't!' Fityuev would sob, with deep inward groans, and with a long-drawn sigh; 'I can't work! kill me! or I shall lay hands on myself!' And he would end by begging alms —a halfpenny for a crust of bread. . . . And a face out of a canvas of Rinaldo Rinaldini!

The factory folk, too, were no good to Nezhdanov; all these fellows were either terribly lively or terribly gloomy . . and Nezhdanov could not get on at all with them. He wrote a long letter on this subject to his friend Silin, complaining bitterly of his own incapacity, and ascribing it to his wretched education and disgusting artistic temperament! He suddenly came to the conclusion that his vocation, in propaganda work, was with the written, not the spoken, living word; but the pamphlets he planned did not work out. Everything he tried to put on paper made on him the same impression of something false, far-fetched, artificial in tone and language, and twice—oh horror! he caught himself unconsciously wandering off into verse or into a sceptical, personal effusion. He positively brought himself—an extraordinary sign

of confidence and intimacy!—to speak of this to Marianna . . . and was again surprised by finding a fellow-feeling in her, of course not with his literary bent, but with the moral malady which he was suffering from, and with which she, too, was familiar. Marianna was quite as much up in arms against all things artistic as he was; yet the reason she had not loved and married Markelov was in reality just that there was not a trace of the artistic nature in him! Marianna, of course, had not the courage to recognise this even to herself; but we know that it is what remains a half-suspected secret for ourselves that is strongest in us.

So the days went by slowly, unequally, but not drearily.

Something curious was taking place in Nezhdanov. He was discontented with himself, with his activity, or rather his inactivity; his words almost constantly had a ring of bitter and biting self-reproach; but in his soul—somewhere very deep within it—there was a kind of happiness, a sense of a certain peace. Whether it was the result of the country quiet, the fresh air, the summer, the good food, and the easy life, or whether it came from the fact that he was now, for the first time in his life, tasting the sweetness of close contact with a

woman's soul—it would be hard to say; but, in fact, his heart was light, even though he complained—and sincerely—to his friend Silin.

This frame of mind was, however, suddenly and violently destroyed in a single day.

On the morning of that day he received a note from Vassily Nikolaevitch, in which he was directed in conjunction with Markelov, while awaiting further instructions, at once to make friends with and come to an understanding with the aforementioned Solomin, and a certain merchant, Golushkin, an Old Believer, living in S——. This note threw Nezhdanov into violent agitation; he could read reproach for his inactivity in it. The bitterness, that had all this time only raged in words, was stirred up again from the bottom of his heart.

Kallomyetsev came to dinner greatly perturbed and exasperated. 'Imagine,' he cried in a voice almost lachrymose, 'what a horrible thing I have just read in the paper: my friend, my dear Mihail, the Servian prince, has been murdered by some miscreants in Belgrade! This is what these Jacobins and revolutionists come to, if we don't put a firm stop to them!' Sipyagin 'begged leave to remark' that this revolting murder was probably not the work of Jacobins, 'whose existence can hardly be supposed in Servia,' but of men of the party of

Karageorgievitch, the enemies of Obrenovitch. . . . But Kallomyetsev would hear nothing, and, in the same lachrymose voice, began again describing how the murdered prince had loved him, what a splendid gun he had given him! . . . Gradually branching off and getting more and more indignant, Kallomyetsev turned from foreign Jacobins to home-bred Nihilists and Socialists, and at last broke into a perfect philippic. Clutching a large, white roll with both hands, and breaking it in half over his soup-plate, quite in the style of real Parisians at the 'Café Riche,' he expressed his longing to crush, to grind to powder, all who were in opposition to any one or anything whatever! That was precisely his expression. 'It is high time,' he declared, lifting his spoon to his mouth, 'it's high time!' he repeated, as he gave his glass to the servant for sherry. He referred reverentially to the great Moscow journalists—and *Ladislas, notre bon et cher Ladislas*—was continually on his lips. And all through this he kept his eyes on Nezhdanov as though to transfix him with them. 'There, that's for you!' he seemed to say. 'Take that! I mean it for you! And there's more like it!' At last Nezhdanov could endure it no longer, and he began to retort. His voice, it is true, was a little uncertain and noarse—not from fear, of course; he began to

champion the hopes, the principles, the ideals of the younger generation. Kallomyetsev at once answered in a high pipe—indignation in him was always expressed by falsetto—and began to be abusive.

Sipyagin majestically took Nezhdanov's part; Valentina Mihalovna, too, agreed with her husband; Anna Zaharovna tried to distract Kolya's attention, and cast looks of fury in all directions from under her cap; Marianna sat as though turned to stone.

But suddenly, on hearing the name of *Ladislas* uttered for the twentieth time, Nezhdanov fired up, and with a blow on the table he cried: 'A fine authority! As though we didn't know what kind of a creature this *Ladislas* is! He, a hired puppet from his birth up, and nothing more!'

'Ah—a—a—so that—that's,' whined Kallomyetsev, stuttering with fury. . . . 'Is that how you allow yourself to refer to a man who enjoys the respect of persons of position like Count Blazenkrampf and Prince Kovrizhkin!'

Nezhdanov shrugged his shoulders. 'A great recommendation truly; Prince Kovrizhkin, the flunkey enthusiast——'

'*Ladislas* is my friend,' shrieked Kallomyetsev; 'he's my comrade . . . and I——'

'So much the worse for you,' interrupted

Nezhdanov; 'it implies that you share his way of thinking, and my remarks apply to you as well.'

Kallomyetsev was livid with wrath.

'Wh-what! You l-laugh! You—you ought —instantly—be——'

'What are you pleased to do with me *instantly*?' Nezhdanov interrupted a second time with ironical politeness.

There is no knowing how this scuffle between the two enemies would have ended, if Sipyagin had not cut it short at the very commencement. Raising his voice and assuming an air in which it was hard to say which was the predominant element—the solemn authority of the statesman, or the dignity of the master of the house —he declared with calm insistence that he did not wish to hear any such intemperate expressions at his table; that he had long ago made it his rule (he corrected himself—his sacred rule) to respect every sort of conviction, but only on the understanding (here he raised his forefinger, adorned with an heraldic ring) that they were maintained within the limits of decorum and good breeding; that though on the one hand he could not but censure a certain intemperance in the language of Mr. Nezhdanov, pardonable, however, at his years, on the other hand he could not approve of the severity of

Mr. Kallomyetsev's attacks on persons of the opposite camp, a severity to be attributed, however, to his zeal for the public welfare.

'Under my roof,' so he concluded, 'under the roof of the Sipyagins, there are neither Jacobins nor puppets, there are only well-meaning people, who, when once they understand one another, are bound to end by shaking hands!'

Nezhdanov and Kallomyetsev both held their peace, but they did not shake hands; apparently the hour of mutual comprehension had not come for them. Quite the contrary; they had never felt such intense mutual hatred. The dinner was concluded in unpleasant and awkward silence; Sipyagin tried to relate a diplomatic anecdote, but fairly gave it up in despair half-way through. Marianna stared doggedly at her plate. She did not care to show the sympathy aroused in her by Nezhdanov's remarks—not from cowardice, oh no! but she felt bound before everything not to betray herself to Madame Sipyagin. She felt her penetrating, persistent eyes fixed on her. And Madame Sipyagin did actually keep her eyes fixed on her, on her and Nezhdanov. His unexpected outburst at first astounded the sharp-witted lady; then all of a sudden she saw, as it were, a light upon it, so much so that involuntarily she murmured. Ah! ... she suddenly divined that Nezhdanov

was drifting away from her—Nezhdanov, who had so lately been in her grasp. Then something must have happened. . . . Could it be Marianna? Yes, of course it was Marianna . . . He attracted her . . . yes, and he . . .

'Steps must be taken,' was how she concluded her reflections, and meanwhile Kallomyetsev was choking with indignation. Even when playing preference, two hours later, he uttered the words, 'Pass!' or 'I buy!' with an aching heart, and in his voice could be heard a hoarse tremolo of wounded feeling, though he put on an appearance of 'being above it'! Sipyagin alone was in reality positively pleased with the whole scene. He had had a chance to show the power of his eloquence, to still the rising storm. . . . He knew Latin, and Virgil's *Quos ego!* was familiar to him. He did not consciously compare himself to Neptune quelling the tempest; but he thought of him with a sort of sympathy.

XV

DIRECTLY it seemed possible, Nezhdanov went away to his room and locked himself in. He did not want to see any one, any one except Marianna. Her room was at the very end of the long corridor which intersected the whole top story. Nezhdanov had only once, and then only for a few instants, been to her room; but it struck him that she would not be angry if he knocked at her door, that she even wished to have a talk with him. It was rather late, about ten o'clock; the Sipyagins, after the scene at dinner, had not thought it necessary to disturb him, and were still playing cards with Kallomyetsev. Valentina Mihalovna had twice inquired after Marianna, as she too had vanished soon after dinner.

'Where is Marianna Vikentyevna?' she asked first in Russian, then in French, not addressing herself to any one in particular, but rather to the walls, as people are wont to do when they are greatly astonished; but soon she too was absorbed in the game.

Nezhdanov walked once or twice up and down his room, then he went along the corridor to Marianna's door and softly knocked. There was no answer. He knocked once more, tried the door. . . . It appeared to be locked. But he had hardly got back to his own room, and sat down to the table, when his own door gave a faint creak and he heard Marianna's voice:

'Alexey Dmitritch, was that *you* came to me?'

He jumped up at once and ran into the corridor; Marianna was standing at his door, a candle in her hand, pale and motionless.

'Yes . . . I . . .' he whispered.

'Come along,' she answered, and walked along the corridor, but before she got to the end she stopped and pushed open a low door with her hand. Nezhdanov saw a small, almost empty room. 'We had better go in here, Alexey Dmitritch, here no one will disturb us.' Nezhdanov obeyed. Marianna set the candle down on the window-sill and turned round to Nezhdanov.

'I understand why it was that you wanted to see me,' she began; 'it is very wretched for you living in this house, and so it is for me too.'

'Yes; I wanted to see you, Marianna Vikentyevna,' answered Nezhdanov, 'but it isn't

wretched for me here since I have come to know you.'

Marianna smiled thoughtfully.

'Thanks, Alexey Dmitritch; but tell me, can you intend to stay here after all this hideous business?'

'I don't suppose they'll let me stay here, they'll dismiss me!'

'Wouldn't you dismiss yourself?'

'Of my own accord? . . . No.'

'Why?'

'You want to know the truth? because *you* are here.'

Marianna bent her head and moved a little further away into the room.

'And besides,' Nezhdanov went on, 'I am *bound* to stay here. You know nothing—but I want, I feel I ought, to tell you everything.'

He stepped up to Marianna and seized her by the hand. She did not take it away, but only looked into his face. 'Listen!' he cried on a sudden powerful impulse, 'listen to me!' And at once, without sitting down, though there were two or three chairs in the room, still standing in front of Marianna and keeping hold of her hand, with impulsive heat, with an eloquence unexpected by himself, Nezhdanov told her of his plans, his intentions, the reasons that had made him accept Sipyagin's offer, of all his

ties, his acquaintances, his past, all that he had always concealed, that he had never spoken openly of to any one! He told her of the letters he received, of Vassily Nikolaevitch, of everything —even of Silin! He spoke hurriedly, without reluctance, or the faintest hesitation, as though he were reproaching himself for not having initiated Marianna into all his secrets before, as though he were seeking her pardon. She heard him attentively, greedily; for the first minute she was bewildered.... But that feeling vanished at once. Gratitude, pride, devotion, resolution, that was what her soul was overflowing with. Her face, her eyes were bright; she laid her other hand on Nezhdanov's hand, her lips were parted in rapture. . . . She had suddenly grown marvellously beautiful!

He stopped at last, looked at her, and as it were for the first time saw *that* face, which seemed at the same time so dear and so familiar to him.

He gave a deep, long sigh....

'Ah! I have done well to tell you everything!'—his lips were hardly able to utter the words.

'Yes, oh, so well, so well!' she repeated, also in a whisper. She unconsciously imitated him, and, indeed, her voice failed her too. 'And it means, you know,' she went on, 'that I am at

your disposal, that I want too to be of use to your cause, that I am ready to do anything that is wanted, to go where I am ordered, that I have always, with my whole soul, yearned for the thing that you . . .'

She too was silent. Another word, and tears of emotion would have fallen in floods. All her strong nature was suddenly soft as wax. The thirst for activity, for sacrifice, immediate sacrifice—that was what mastered her.

The steps of some one in the corridor could be heard—cautious, rapid, light steps.

Marianna suddenly drew herself up, freed her hands; she was at once transformed and alert. Something scornful, something audacious came over her face.

'I know who is spying on us at this minute,' she said, so loudly that each of her words resounded distinctly in the corridor. 'Madame Sipyagin is spying on us . . . but I don't care a bit for that.'

The sound of steps ceased.

'What then?' Marianna said, turning to Nezhdanov, 'what am I to do? how am I to help you? Tell me . . . tell me soon! What's to be done?'

'What?' said Nezhdanov; 'I don't know yet . . . I got a letter from Markelov.'

'When? when?'

'This evening. I must go with him to-morrow to the factory to see Solomin.'

'Yes . . . yes. . . . That's a splendid man, now, Markelov. He's a real friend.'

'Like me?'

Marianna looked Nezhdanov straight in the face.

'No . . . not like you.'

'How? . . .'

She turned suddenly away.

'Ah! don't you understand what you have become to me, and what I am feeling at this moment? . . .'

Nezhdanov's heart beat violently; involuntarily he looked down. This girl, who loved him—him, a poor homeless devil—who believed in him, who was ready to follow him, to go with him towards the same aim—this exquisite girl—Marianna, at that instant, was to Nezhdanov the incarnation of everything good and true on earth—the incarnation of all the love of mother, sister, wife, that he had known nothing of—the incarnation of fatherland, happiness, struggle, freedom!

He raised his head, and saw her eyes again bent upon him. . . .

Oh, how that clear, noble glance sank into his soul!

'And so,' he began in an unsteady voice, 'I

am going to-morrow. . . . And when I come back, Marianna Vikentyevna'—(he suddenly found it awkward to use this formal address)—'I will tell you what I find out, what is decided. Henceforth everything I do, everything I think, everything, you shall be the first to know . . . Marianna.'

'Oh, my friend!' cried Marianna, and again she clasped his hand, 'and I make the same promise to you, dear.'

This last word came as easily and simply from her as though it could not be otherwise, as though it were the 'dear' of long, intimate companionship.

'Can I see the letter?'

'Here it is, here.'

Marianna skimmed through the letter, and almost with reverence she raised her eyes upon him.

'Do they intrust such important commissions to you, Alexey?'

He smiled at her in answer, and put the letter in his pocket.

'Strange,' he said, 'why, we have made known our love to each other—we love one another—and there has not been a word said about it between us!'

'What need?' whispered Marianna, and suddenly she flung herself on his neck, pressed

her head to his shoulder. . . . But they did not even kiss—they would have felt it ordinary and somehow dreadful—and at once they separated, after tightly clasping each other's hands again.

Marianna turned away to get the candle, which she had put on the window-sill of the empty room, and only then something like embarrassment came over her. She extinguished it, and, gliding quickly along the corridor in the black darkness, she returned to her room, undressed and went to bed, still in the darkness—she felt it somehow comforting.

XVI

THE next morning when Nezhdanov woke up he felt no embarrassment at the recollection of what had happened overnight; on the contrary, he was filled with a kind of serene and sober happiness, as though he had done something which ought really to have been done long before. Asking for two days' leave from Sipyagin, who consented at once, though stiffly, to his absence, Nezhdanov went to Markelov's. Before starting he succeeded in getting an interview with Marianna. She, too, was not at all ashamed or embarrassed; she looked calmly and resolutely at him, and calmly addressed him by his Christian name. She was only excited about what he would learn at Markelov's, and begged him to tell her everything.

'That's a matter of course,' answered Nezhdanov.

'And after all,' he reflected, 'why should we be disturbed? In our friendship, personal

feeling has played . . . a secondary part—though we are united for ever. In the name of the cause? Yes, in the name of the cause!'

So fancied Nezhdanov, and he did not suspect how much of truth, and how much of falsehood, there was in his fancies.

He found Markelov in the same weary and morose frame of mind. They dined after a fashion, and then set off in the same old coach (they hired from a peasant a second trace-horse, a colt, who had never been in harness before—Markelov's horse was still lame) to the merchant Faleyev's big cotton factory, where Solomin lived. Nezhdanov's curiosity was aroused; he felt eager to make a closer acquaintance with a man of whom he had heard so much of late. Solomin was prepared for their visit; directly the two travellers stopped at the gates of the factory and gave their names, they were promptly conducted into the unsightly little lodge occupied by the 'superintendent of the machinery.' He was himself in the chief wing of the building; while one of the workmen ran to fetch him, Nezhdanov and Markelov had time to go to the window and look about them. The factory was apparently in a flourishing condition and overburdened with work; from every side came

the brisk, noisy hum of unceasing activity, the snorting and rattling of machines, the creaking of looms, the hum of wheels, the flapping of straps, while trollies, barrels, and loaded carts moved in and out; there was the sound of loudly shouted instructions, bells and whistles; workmen in smocks with belts round the waist, their hair bound round with a strap, work-girls in print dresses hurrying by; horses were led by in harness. . . . There was the busy hum of the labour of thousands of human beings strained to their utmost. Everything moved in regular, rational fashion, at full speed; but not only was there no attempt at style or neatness, there was not even any trace of cleanliness to be observed in anything anywhere; on the contrary, on all sides one was impressed by neglect, filth, grime. Here a window was broken and there the plaster was peeling off, the boards were loose, a door yawned wide open; a great, black puddle, covered with an irridescent film of slime, stood in the middle of the principal courtyard; further on lay some discarded bricks; bits of matting and sailcloth, boxes, scraps of rope lay wallowing in the mud; shaggy and lean dogs crept about, not even barking; in a corner under a fence sat a pot-bellied, dishevelled little boy of four, crusted from head to foot with filth, crying

hopelessly as though he had been deserted by the whole world; beside him, bespattered with the same filth, a sow, surrounded by a litter of spotted sucking pigs, was inspecting some cabbage stalks; ragged linen was fluttering on a line; and what an odour, what a stench everywhere! A Russian mill, in fact; not a German or a French factory.

Nezhdanov glanced at Markelov.

'I have heard so much talked about Solomin's great abilities,' he began, 'that, I confess, all this disorder rather surprises me; I didn't expect it.'

'It isn't disorder,' answered Markelov grimly, 'it's the Russian sluttishness. For all that, it's turning over millions! And he has to adapt himself to the old ways, and to practical needs, and to the owner himself. Have you any notion what Faleyev's like?'

'Not the slightest.'

'The greatest skinflint in Moscow. A bourgeois—that's the word for him!'

At that instant Solomin came into the room. Again Nezhdanov was fated to be disappointed in him, as in the factory. At first sight Solomin gave one the impression of being a Finn or, still more, a Swede. He was tall, lean, broad-shouldered, with light eyebrows and eyelashes; he had a long yellow face, a short broad

nose, very small greenish eyes, a placid expression, large prominent lips, white teeth, also large, and a cleft chin covered with a faint down. He was dressed as a mechanic or stoker; an old pea-jacket with baggy pockets on his body, a crumpled oilskin cap on his head, a woollen comforter round his neck, and tarred boots on his feet. He was accompanied by a man about forty, in a rough peasant coat, with an exceedingly mobile gipsy face and keen jet-black eyes, with which he at once scanned Nezhdanov, directly he came into the room. . . . Markelov he knew already. His name was Pavel; he was said to be Solomin's right hand.

Solomin approached his two visitors without haste, pressed the hand of each of them in his horny, bony hand, without a word, took a sealed packet out of the table-drawer and handed it, also without a word, to Pavel, who at once went out of the room. Then he stretched, and cleared his throat; flinging his cap off his head with one wave of his hand, he sat down on a wooden, painted stool, and, motioning Markelov and Nezhdanov to a similar sofa, he said, 'Please sit down.'

Markelov first introduced Solomin to Nezhdanov; he again shook hands with him. Then Markelov began talking of the 'cause,' and

mentioned Vassily Nikolaevitch's letter. Nezhdanov handed the letter to Solomin. While he read it, attentively and deliberately, his eyes moving on from line to line, Nezhdanov watched him. Solomin was sitting near the window; the sun, now low in the sky, threw a glaring light on his tanned, slightly perspiring face and his light, dusty hair, showing up a number of golden threads among them. His nostrils quivered as his breath came and went while he read, and his lips moved as though he were forming each word; he held the letter with a strong grip, rather high up with both hands. All this, for some unknown reason, pleased Nezhdanov. Solomin gave the letter back to Nezhdanov, smiled at him, and again began listening to Markelov. The latter talked and talked, but at last he ceased.

'Do you know what,' began Solomin, and his voice, rather hoarse, but young and powerful, pleased Nezhdanov too, 'it's not quite convenient here at my place; let us go to your house, it's not more than five miles to you. I suppose you came in the coach?'

'Yes.'

'Well . . . then there will be room for me. In an hour my work is over and I am at liberty. We will have a talk. Are you at liberty too?' —he addressed Nezhdanov.

'Till the day after to-morrow.'

'That's capital. We will stay the night with Mr. Markelov. Can we do that, Sergei Mihalitch?'

'What a question! Of course you can.'

'Well, I'll be ready directly. Only let me clean myself up a bit.'

'And how are things going with you at the factory?' Markelov inquired significantly.

Solomin looked away.

'We will have a talk,' he said a second time. 'Wait a little. . . . I'll be back directly. . . . I've forgotten something.'

He went out. If it had not been for the good impression he had made on Nezhdanov, the latter would probably have thought, and perhaps even have said to Markelov, 'Isn't he shuffling out of it?' But no question of the sort even entered his head.

An hour later, at the time when from every floor of the vast building, on every staircase, and at every door the noisy crowd of factory hands were streaming out, the coach, in which were seated Markelov, Nezhdanov, and Solomin, drove out of the gates on to the road.

'Vassily Fedotitch! is it to be done?' Pavel, who had escorted Solomin to the gate, shouted after him.

'No; wait a little' . . . answered Solomin.

'That refers to a night operation,' he explained to his companion.

They reached Borzyonkovo; and had supper, rather for the sake of manners. Then cigars were lighted and the talk began, one of those interminable, midnight, Russian talks, which of the same form and on the same scale are hardly to be found in any other people. Here too, though, Solomin did not fulfil Nezhdanov's expectations. He spoke noticeably little . . . so little, that one might say he was almost continually silent; but he listened intently, and if he uttered any criticism or remark, then it was sensible, weighty, and very brief. It turned out that Solomin did not believe that a revolution was at hand in Russia; but not wishing to force his opinions on others, he did not try to prevent them from making an attempt, and looked on at them, not from a distance, but as a comrade by their side. He was very intimate with the Petersburg revolutionists, and was to a certain extent in sympathy with them, since he was himself one of the people; but he realised the instinctive aloofness from the movement of the people, without whom 'you can do nothing,' and who need a long preparation, and that not in the manner nor by the means of these men. And so he stood aside, not in a hypocritical or shifty

way, but like a man of sense who doesn't care to ruin himself or others for nothing. But as for listening . . . why not listen, and learn too, if one can? Solomin was the only son of a deacon; he had five sisters, all married to village priests or deacons; but with the consent of his father, a steady, sober man, he had given up the seminary, had begun to study mathematics, and had devoted himself with special ardour to mechanics; he had entered the business of an Englishman, who had come to love him like a father, and had given him the means of going to Manchester, where he spent two years and learned English. He had lately come into the Moscow merchant's factory, and though he was exacting with subordinates, because that was the way of doing things he had learned in England, he was in high favour with them; 'he's one of ourselves,' they used to say. His father was much pleased with him; he used to call him 'a very steady-going chap,' and his only complaint was that his son didn't want to get married.

During the midnight conversation at Markelov's, Solomin was, as we have said already, almost completely silent; but when Markelov began discussing the expectations he had formed of the factory hands, Solomin, with his habitual brevity, observed that with us in

Russia, factory workers are not what they are abroad — they 're the meekest set of people.

'And the peasants?' inquired Markelov.

'The peasants? There are pretty many of the close-fisted, money-lending sort among them now, and every year there 'll be more; but they only know their own interest; the rest are sheep, blind and ignorant.'

'Then where are we to look?'

Solomin smiled.

'Seek and ye shall find.'

He was almost constantly smiling, and the smile, like the man himself, was peculiarly guileless, but not meaningless. To Nezhdanov he behaved in quite a special way; the young student had awakened a feeling of interest, almost of tenderness, in him.

During this same midnight discussion, Nezhdanov suddenly got flushed and hot, and broke into an outburst; Solomin softly got up, and, moving across the room with his large tread, he closed a window that stood open behind Nezhdanov's head. . . .

'You mustn't get cold,' he remarked naïvely in reply to the orator's puzzled look.

Nezhdanov began questioning him as to what socialistic ideas he was trying to introduce into the factory in his charge, and whether he

intended to arrange for the workpeople to have a share of the profits.

'My dear soul!' answered Solomin, 'we have set up a school and a tiny hospital, and to be sure our master struggled against that like a bear!'

Once only Solomin lost his temper in earnest, and struck the table such a blow with his powerful fist that everything shook upon it, not excepting a forty-pound weight that lay near the inkstand. He had been told of some legal injustice, the oppressive treatment of a workmen's guild. . . .

When Nezhdanov and Markelov started discussing how 'to act,' how to put their plans into execution, Solomin still listened with curiosity, even with respect; but he did not himself utter a single word. This conversation lasted till four o'clock. And what, what did they not discuss? Markelov, among other things, alluded mysteriously to the indefatigable traveller Kislyakov, to his letters, which were becoming more and more interesting; he promised to show Nezhdanov some of them, and even to let him take them home, since they were very lengthy, and not written in a very legible hand; and over and above this there was a great deal of erudition in them, and there were verses too, not only frivolous ones, but of

a socialistic tendency! From Kislyakov, Markelov passed to soldiers, adjutants, Germans; he got at last to his articles on the artillery; Nezhdanov talked of the antagonism between Heine and Börne, of Proudhon, of realism in art; while Solomin listened, listened and pondered and smoked, and, still smiling and not saying a single smart thing, he seemed to understand better than any one what lay at the root of the matter.

It struck four. . . . Nezhdanov and Markelov were almost dropping with fatigue, while Solomin had not turned a hair. The friends separated, but first it was mutually agreed to go the next day to the town to see the merchant Golushkin on propaganda business. Golushkin himself was very zealous, and moreover he promised proselytes! Solomin expressed a doubt whether it was worth while to visit Golushkin. However, he agreed later that it was worth while.

XVII

MARKELOV'S guests were still asleep when a messenger came to him with a letter from his sister, Madame Sipyagin. In the letter Valentina Mihalovna wrote to him of various trifling domestic details, asked him to send her back a book he had borrowed—and incidentally, in the postscript, told him of an 'amusing' piece of news: that his former flame, Marianna, was in love with the tutor, Nezhdanov—and the tutor with her; that she, Valentina Mihalovna, was not repeating gossip—she had seen it all with her own eyes, and heard it with her own ears. Markelov's face grew dark as night . . . but he did not utter one word; he gave orders to give the book to the messenger, and when he saw Nezhdanov coming downstairs he said, 'Good morning' to him, just as usual—even gave him the promised packet of Kislyakov's epistles; he did not stop with him, though, but went out 'to see after things.' Nezhdanov went back to his room, and looked through the letters. The

young propagandist talked incessantly of himself, of his feverish activity; according to his own statement, he had during the last month journeyed through eleven districts, been in nine towns, twenty-nine villages, fifty-three hamlets, one farm, and eight factories; sixteen nights he had passed in hay-lofts, one in a stable, one even in a cow-shed (he mentioned, in a parenthetical note, that fleas did not affect him); he had got into mud-huts, into workmen's barracks; everywhere he had taught, preached, distributed pamphlets, and collected information by the way; some facts he had noted on the spot, others he carried in his memory on the latest system of mnemonics; he had written fourteen long letters, twenty-seven short ones, and eighteen notes, four of which were written in pencil, one in blood, one in soot and water; and all this he had managed to do because he had mastered the systematic disposition of his time, taking as his models Quintin Johnson, Karrelius, Sverlitsky, and other writers and statisticians. Then he talked again of himself, his lucky star; and how and with what additions he had completed Fourier's theory of the passions; declared that he was the first to reach the 'bed-rock,' that he should 'not pass from the world without leaving a trace behind,' that he himself wondered that he, a boy of two-and-

twenty, should already have solved all the problems of life and of science, and that he should turn Russia upside down, that he would 'give her a shaking!' *Dixi!!* he added at the end of the line. This word, *Dixi*, occurred frequently in Kislyakov's effusions, and always with two exclamation marks. In one of the letters there was a socialistic poem, addressed to a girl, and beginning with the words:

'Love not me, but the idea!'

Nezhdanov marvelled inwardly, not so much at Mr. Kislyakov's self-conceit as at Markelov's honest simplicity . . . but then came the thought, 'Good taste be hanged! Mr. Kislyakov even may be of use.'

The three friends all met in the dining-room for morning tea, but the previous night's discussion was not renewed between them. Not one of them was disposed to talk, but only Solomin was placidly silent; both Nezhdanov and Markelov were inwardly perturbed.

After tea they set off to the town; Markelov's old servant, sitting on his locker, followed his former owner with his habitual dejected glance.

The merchant, Golushkin, with whom Nezhdanov was to make acquaintance, was the son of a wealthy merchant in the wholesale drug

business—an Old Believer of the Fedosian sect. He had not increased his father's fortune by his own efforts, as he was, as it is called by the Russians, a *joueur*, an Epicurean of the Russian stamp, and had no sort of aptitude for business. He was a man of forty, rather stout, and ugly, pockmarked, with small pig's eyes; he talked in a great hurry, stumbling, as it were, over his words, gesticulating with his hands, swinging his legs, and going off into giggles . . . and in general making the impression of a blockhead and a coxcomb of extraordinary vanity. He considered himself a man of culture, because he wore German clothes, and was hospitable, though he lived in filth and disorder, had rich acquaintances, and used to go to the theatre and 'protect' low music-hall actresses, with whom he communicated in an extraordinary would-be French jargon. The thirst for popularity was his ruling passion; for the name of Golushkin to be thundering through the world! As once Suvarov or Potemkin, why not now Kapiton Golushkin? It was just this passion, overcoming even his innate meanness, which had flung him, as he with some self-complacency expressed it, into the *opposition* (he had at first pronounced this foreign word simply *position*, but afterwards he had learned better), and brought him into connection with the nihilists; he

uttered freely the most extreme views, laughed at his own Old Believers' faith, ate meat in Lent, played cards, and drank champagne like water. And he never got into trouble, because, he used to say, 'I have every authority bribed just where it's needed, every hole is sewn up, all mouths are shut, all ears are deaf.' He was a widower and childless; his sister's sons hung about him with timorous servility . . . but he used to call them unenlightened clowns and barbarians, and would hardly look at them. He lived in a large stone house, rather sluttishly kept; in some rooms the furniture was all of foreign make—in others there was nothing but painted chairs and an American-leather sofa. Pictures were hung everywhere, and all of them were wretched daubs—red landscapes, pink marine views, Moller's 'Kiss,' and fat, naked women, with red knees and elbows. Though Golushkin had no family, there were a great many servants and dependents of different kinds under his roof; it was not from generosity that he kept them, but, again, from a desire for power, so as to have a public of some sort at his command to show off before. 'My clients,' he used to call them when he was in a bragging mood; he never read a book, but he had a capital memory for learned expressions.

The young men found Golushkin in his

study. Dressed in a long coat, with a cigar in his mouth, he was pretending to read the newspaper. On seeing them, he at once jumped up, and fussed about, turning red, shouting for some refreshment to be brought immediately, asking questions, laughing—all at the same time. Markelov and Solomin he knew; Nezhdanov was a stranger to him. Hearing that he was a student, Golushkin laughed again, shook his hand a second time, and said: 'Capital! capital! our forces are growing. . . . Learning is light, ignorance is darkness. I've not a ha'porth of learning myself, but I've insight—that's how I've got on!'

It struck Nezhdanov that Mr. Golushkin was nervous and ill at ease . . . and that was actually the fact. 'Look out, brother Kapitov! mind you don't come a cropper in the mud!' was his first thought at the sight of any new person. Soon, however, he recovered himself, and in the same hurried, lisping, muddled language began talking of Vassily Nikolaevitch, of his character, of the necessity of pro-pa-ganda (he had that word very pat, but he articulated it slowly); of how he, Golushkin, had discovered a capital new recruit, most trustworthy; of how it seemed now that the time was at hand, was ready for . . . for the lancet (at this he glanced at Markelov, who did

not, however, stir a muscle); then, turning to Nezhdanov, he started singing his own praises, with as much zest as the great correspondent, Kislyakov, himself. He said that he had long left the ranks of the benighted, that he knew well the rights of the proletariat (that word, too, he had a firm hold of), that though he had actually given up commerce and taken to banking operations—to increase his capital—that was only that the aforesaid capital might be ready at any moment to serve . . . the good of the common movement, the good, so to speak, of the people; and that he, Golushkin, had in reality the greatest contempt for money! At this point a servant came in with refreshments, and Golushkin cleared his throat expressively, and asked wouldn't he begin with a little glass of something? and set the example by gulping down a wineglass of pepper-brandy.

The visitors partook of the refreshments. Golushkin thrust some huge morsels of caviar in his mouth, and drank with unflagging punctuality, saying, 'Come, gentlemen, a glass of good Maçon now.'

Addressing himself again to Nezhdanov, he asked where he had come from, and how long and where he was staying; and learning that he was living at Sipyagin's, he cried: 'I know that gentleman. No good!' and then

proceeded to abuse all the landowners of the province of S——, on the grounds, not only of their having no public spirit, but of their not even understanding their own interests.... Only, strange to say, though his language was strong, his eyes strayed restlessly about, and a look of uneasiness could be detected in them. Nezhdanov could not quite make out what sort of a person he was, and in what way he was of use to them. Solomin was silent, as usual; and Markelov had such a gloomy face, that Nezhdanov asked him at last, what was wrong with him? To which Markelov replied that there was nothing wrong with him, in the tone in which people commonly answer when they mean to give you to understand that there is something, but not for you to know. Golushkin again started abusing some one or other, then he passed to praise of the younger generation: 'such talented fellows,' he declared, 'are appearing among us nowadays! such talent! Ah! . . .'

Solomin cut him short with the question, who was the trustworthy young man he had spoken of, and where had he picked him up? Golushkin giggled, repeated twice, 'Ah, you shall see, you shall see,' and began cross-questioning him about his factory, and its 'shark' of an owner, to which Solomin replied

in monosyllables. Then Golushkin poured out champagne for all; and, bending down to Nezhdanov's ear, he whispered, 'To the republic!' and drank off his glass at a gulp. Nezhdanov sipped his; Solomin remarked that he didn't drink wine in the morning; Markelov angrily and resolutely drained his glass to the last drop. He seemed devoured by impatience; 'here we are wasting our time,' he seemed to say, 'and not coming to the real matter to be discussed.' . . . He struck a blow on the table, exclaimed sternly, 'Gentlemen!' and was about to speak . . .

But at that instant there came into the room a sleek man with a foxy face and a consumptive appearance, in a merchant's dress of nankeen, with both hands outstretched like wings. Bowing to the party collectively, the man communicated something to Golushkin in a whisper: 'I'll come directly,' the latter replied hurriedly. 'Gentlemen,' he added, 'I must beg you to excuse me . . . Vasya here, my clerk, has told me of a *leetle* affair' (Golushkin pronounced it thus purposely, by way of being jocose) 'which absolutely necessitates my absenting myself for a while; but I hope, gentlemen, that you will consent to take a meal with me to-day at three o'clock; and then we shall be much more at liberty!'

Neither Solomin nor Nezhdanov knew what answer to make; but Markelov answered at once with the same sternness in his face and voice: 'Of course we will; it would be rather too much of a farce if we didn't.'

'I am greatly obliged,' said Golushkin hastily, and bending to Markelov, he added: 'A thousand roubles I devote to the cause in any case . . . have no doubt about that!'

And so saying he waved his right hand three times, with the thumb and little finger sticking out, as a sign of his good faith.

He escorted his guests to the door, and standing in the doorway, shouted, 'I shall expect you at three!'

'You may expect us!' Markelov alone responded.

'Well, my friends,' observed Solomin, directly they were all three in the street, 'I 'm going to take a cab and go back to the factory. What are we to do till dinner-time? Waste our time idling about? And, indeed, our worthy merchant . . . it strikes me . . . is like the goat in the fable, neither good for wool nor for milk.'

'Oh, there shall be some wool,' observed Markelov grimly. 'He was just promising some money. Or isn't he nice enough for you? We can't be particular. We 're not so much courted that we can afford to be squeamish.'

'I 'm not squeamish!' said Solomin calmly; 'I 'm only asking myself what good my presence can do. However,' he added with a glance at Nezhdanov, and a smile, 'I will stay, by all means. Even death, as they say, is sweet in good company.'

Markelov raised his head.

'Let 's go, meanwhile, to the public gardens; it 's a lovely day. We can look at the people.'

'Very well.'

They went, Markelov and Solomin in front, Nezhdanov behind them.

XVIII

STRANGE was the state of his mind. In the last two days so many new sensations, new faces. . . . For the first time in his life he had come close to a girl, whom, in all probability, he loved; he was present at the beginning of the thing to which, in all probability, all his energies were consecrated. . . . Well? was he rejoicing? No. Was he wavering, afraid, confused? Oh, certainly not. Was he, at least, feeling that tension of his whole being, that impulse forward into the front ranks of the battle, to be expected as the struggle grew near? No again. Did he believe, then, in this cause? Did he believe in his own love? 'Oh, damned artistic temperament! sceptic!' his lips murmured inaudibly. Why this weariness, this disinclination to speak even, without shrieking and raving? What inner voice did he want to stifle with those ravings? But Marianna, that noble, faithful comrade, that pure, passionate nature, that exquisite girl, did not she love him? Was not

that an immense happiness, to have met her, to have gained her friendship, her love? And these two walking in front of him at this moment, this Markelov, this Solomin, whom he knew so little as yet, but to whom he felt so drawn, were they not fine types of the Russian nature, of Russian life, and was not it a happiness, too, to know them, to be friends with them? Then why this undefined, vague, gnawing sensation? How and why this dejection? 'If you're a brooding pessimist,' his lips murmured again, 'a damned fine revolutionist you'll make!' You ought to be writing rhymes, and sulking and nursing your own petty thoughts and sensations, and busying yourself with psychological fancies and subtleties of all sorts, but at least don't mistake your sickly, nervous whims and irritability for manly indignation, for the honest anger of a man of convictions! O Hamlet, Hamlet, how to escape from the shadow of your spirit! How cease to follow you in everything, even in the loathsome enjoyment of one's own self-depreciation!'

'Alexey! Friend! Hamlet of Russia!' he heard suddenly, like the echo of these reflections, in a familiar squeaky voice. 'Is it you I see before me?'

Nezhdanov raised his eyes, and with amazement beheld Paklin!—Paklin, in quite an Arca-

dian get-up, a summer suit of flesh-colour, with no cravat round his neck, a large straw hat with a blue ribbon pushed on to the back of his head, and in varnished shoes!

He at once limped up to Nezhdanov and grasped his hands.

'First of all,' he began, 'though we are in a public garden, I must, for old custom's sake, embrace . . . and kiss you . . . Once, twice, thrice! Secondly, you must know that if I had not met you to-day, you would certainly have seen me to-morrow, as I knew your abode, and am, indeed, in this town with that object . . . how I got here, we will talk of hereafter; and thirdly, introduce me to your companions. Tell me briefly who they are, and them who I am, and then let's proceed to enjoy ourselves!'

Nezhdanov acted on his friend's request, named him, Markelov and Solomin, and told what each of them was, where he lived, what he did, and so on.

'Capital!' cried Paklin; 'and now let me lead you all far from the madding crowd, though there's not much of it here, certainly, to a secluded seat, where I sit, at moments of contemplation, to enjoy the beauties of nature. There's a wonderful view: the governor's house, two striped sentry-boxes, three policemen, and not one dog! Don't be too much surprised at

the remarks with which I'm so perseveringly trying to amuse you! I'm the representative, in my friend's opinion, of Russian wit . . . no doubt that's why I'm lame.'

Paklin led the friends to the 'secluded seat,' and made them sit down on it, after dislodging two beggar women as a preliminary. The young men proceeded to 'exchange ideas,' generally a rather tedious process, especially at a first meeting, and a particularly unprofitable occupation at all times.

'Stay!' Paklin cried suddenly, turning to Nezhdanov. 'I must explain to you how it is I'm here. You know I always take my sister away somewhere every summer; when I found out that you had gone off into the neighbourhood of this town, I remembered that there were two wonderful creatures living in this very town, a husband and wife, who are connections of ours . . . on my mother's side. My father was a tradesman'—(Nezhdanov was aware of the fact, but Paklin mentioned it for the benefit of the other two)—'but my mother was of noble family. And for ages they've been inviting us to come and see them! There! thought I . . . the very thing. They're the kindest people, it'll do my sister any amount of good—what could be better? Well, and so here we are. And it was just as I thought!

I can't tell you how nice it is for us here! But what types! what types! you really must make their acquaintance! What are you doing here? Where are you going to dine? And why is it you were here, of all places?'

'We are going to dinner with a man called Golushkin . . . a merchant here,' answered Nezhdanov.

'At what o'clock?'

'Three.'

'And you are seeing him upon . . . upon . . .' Paklin took a comprehensive look at Solomin, who was smiling, and Markelov, whose face grew darker and darker. . . .

'Come, Alyosha, tell them . . . make some sort of Masonic sign, do . . . tell them they needn't be on their guard with me . . I'm one of you . . . of your party. . . .'

'Golushkin, too, is one of us,' observed Nezhdanov.

'Now, I've a brilliant idea! There's a long while yet to three o'clock. Listen, let's go and see my relations!'

'Why, you're crazy! How could we? . . .'

'Don't worry yourself about that! I'll take all that on myself. Imagine: it's an oasis! Not a glimpse of politics, nor literature, nor anything modern has penetrated into it. A queer podgy sort of little house, such as you never see

anywhere now; the very smell in it's antique; the people antique, the atmosphere antique . . . take it how you will, it's all antique, Catherine the Second, powder, hoops, eighteenth century! Just fancy a husband and wife, both very old, the same age, and without a wrinkle; round, chubby, spruce little things, a perfect pair of little poll-parrots; and good-natured to stupidity, to saintliness, no bounds to it! They tell me "boundless" good-nature often goes with an absence of moral feeling. . . . But I can't enter into such subtleties; I only know that my little old dears are the very soul of good-nature! Never had any children. The blessed innocents! That's what they call them in the town: blessed innocents. Both dressed alike in sort of striped gowns, and such good stuff: you can never see anything like that either nowadays. They're awfully like each other, only one has a mob-cap on her head, and the other a skull-cap, though that has the same sort of frilling as the mob-cap, only no strings. If it weren't for that difference, you wouldn't know which was which; especially as the husband has no beard. Their names are Fomushka and Fimushka. I tell you people ought to pay at the door to look at them, as curiosities. They love one another in the most impossible way; but if any one comes to visit

them, it's "Delighted, so good of you!" And such hospitable creatures! they show off all their little tricks at once to amuse you. There's only one thing: one mustn't smoke; not that they're dissenters, but tobacco upsets them. . . . You see, no one smoked in their day. However, they can't stand canaries either, because that bird was very rarely seen in their day too.... And that's a great blessing, you'll admit! Well? will you come?'

'Really, I don't know,' began Nezhdanov.

'Stay; I haven't told you everything yet; their voices are just alike: with your eyes shut you wouldn't know which was speaking. Only Fomushka speaks just a little more expressively. Come, my friends, you are now on the brink of a great undertaking—perhaps, a terrible conflict. . . . Why shouldn't you, before flinging yourselves into those stormy deeps, try a dip . . . .'

'In stagnant water?' Markelov put in.

'And what if so? Stagnant it is, certainly; but fresh and pure. There are ponds in the steppes which never get putrid, though there's no stream through them, because they are fed by springs from the bottom. And my old dears have such springs too in the bottom of their hearts, and pure as can be. It all comes to this, would you like to know

how people lived a century, a century and a half ago, make haste then and follow me. Or soon a day and hour will come—it's bound to be the same hour for both—and my poll-parrots will be knocked off their perches, and all that 's antique will end with them, and the podgy little house will fall down, and the place of it will be overgrown with what, my grandmother used to tell me, always grows over the place where man's handiwork has been—that 's to say —nettles, burdock, thistles, wormwood, dock leaves; the very street will cease to be, and men will come and go and never see anything like this again in all the ages!'

'Well!' cried Nezhdanov, 'let 's be off directly!'

'I 'm ready, with the greatest pleasure, indeed,' observed Solomin. 'It 's not in my line, but it 's interesting; and if Mr. Paklin can really guarantee that we should not be putting any one out by our visit, then . . . why . . .'

'Don't worry yourself!' Paklin cried in his turn; 'they 'll be simply transported—that 's all. No need of ceremony in this case! I tell you, they 're blessed innocents; we 'll make them sing to us. And you, too, Mr. Markelov, do you agree?'

Markelov shrugged his shoulders angrily.

'I 'm not going to stay here alone! lead the way, if you please.'

The young men got up from the seat.

'You've a formidable gentleman there,' Paklin whispered to Nezhdanov, indicating Markelov, 'the very image of John the Baptist eating locusts . . . the locusts without the honey! But he,' he added with a nod in Solomin's direction, 'is delightful! What a jolly smile! I've noticed the only people who smile like that are those who're superior to other people—without being aware of it.'

'Are there ever people like that?' asked Nezhdanov.

'Not often; but there are some,' answered Paklin.

XIX

FOMUSHKA and Fimushka, otherwise Foma Lavrentyevitch and Evfimiya Pavlovna Subotchev, both belonged to the same family of pure Russian descent, and were considered to be almost the oldest inhabitants of the town of S——. They had been married very early, and a very long time ago had installed themselves in the wooden house of their ancestors on the outskirts of the town, had never moved from there, and had never changed their mode of life or their habits in any respect. Time seemed to have stood still for them; no 'novelty' had crossed the boundary of their 'oasis.' Their fortune was not large; but their peasants sent them up live stock and provisions several times a year, just as in the old days before the emancipation. At a fixed date the village elder appeared with the rents and a brace of woodcocks, supposed to be shot on the manorial forest domains, though the latter had in reality long ceased to

exist. They used to regale him with tea at the drawing-room door, present him with a sheepskin cap and a pair of green wash-leather mittens, and bid him God-speed. The Subotchevs' house was filled with house-serfs, as in the old serf days. The old man-servant Kalliopitch, clothed in a jerkin of extraordinarily stout cloth with a stand-up collar and tiny steel buttons, announced in a sing-song chant that 'dinner is on the table,' and dozed standing behind his mistress's chair, all quite in the old style. The sideboard was in his charge; he had the care of 'the various spices, cardamums and lemons,' and to the question, 'Hadn't he heard that all serfs had received their freedom?' he always responded, 'To be sure, folks would for ever be talking some such idle nonsense; that like enough there was freedom among the Turks, but he, thank God, had escaped all that.' A girl, Pufka, a dwarf, was kept for entertainment, and an old nurse, Vassilyevna, used to come in during dinner with a large dark kerchief on her head, and talk in a thick voice of all the news—of Napoleon, of the year 1812, of Antichrist, and white niggers; or else, her chin propped in her hand, in an attitude of woe, she would tell what she had dreamed and what it portended, and what fortune she had got from the cards. The Subotchevs' house itself

was quite different from all the other houses in the town; it was entirely built of oak and had windows exactly square. The double windows for winter were never taken out all the year round! And there were in it all kinds of little anterooms and passages, lumber-rooms and store-closets, and raised landings with balustrades and alcoves raised on rounded posts, and all sorts of little back premises and cellars. In front was a little palisade, and behind a garden, and in the garden outbuildings of every sort, granaries, cellars, ice-houses . . . a perfect nest of them! And it was not that there were many goods stored in all these outhouses; some, indeed, were tumbling down; but it had all been so arranged in old days, and so it had remained. The Subotchevs had only two horses, ancient, grey, and shaggy; one was covered with white patches from age; they called it the Immovable. They were—at most once a month—harnessed to an extraordinary equipage, known to the whole town, and presenting a resemblance to a terrestrial globe with one quarter cut out in front, lined within with foreign yellow material, closely dotted with big spots like warts. The last yard of that stuff had been woven in Utrecht or Lyons in the time of the Empress Elizabeth! The Subotchevs' coachman, too, was

an exceedingly aged man, redolent of train-oil and pitch; his beard began just under his eyes, while his eyebrows fell in little cascades to meet his beard. He was so deliberate in all his movements that it took him five minutes to take a pinch of snuff, two minutes to stick his whip in his belt, and more than two hours to harness the Immovable alone. His name was Perfishka. If, when the Subotchevs were driving, their carriage had to go ever so little uphill, they were invariably alarmed (they were as frightened, however, going downhill), hung on to the straps of the carriage, and both repeated aloud: 'God grant the horses—the horses . . . the strength of Samuel, and make us . . . us light as a feather, light as a feather! . . .'

The Subotchevs were regarded by everyone in the town as eccentric, almost as mad; and indeed they were conscious themselves that they were not in touch with the life of the day . . . but they did not trouble themselves very much about that: the manner of life to which they had been born and bred and married they adhered to. Only one peculiarity of that manner of life had not clung to them: from their birth up they had never punished any one, never had any one flogged. If any servant of theirs proved to be an irreclaimable thief or drunkard,

first they were patient and bore with him a long while, just as they would have put up with bad weather; and at last tried to get rid of him, to pass him on to other masters: let others, they would say, take their turn of them for a little. But such a disaster rarely befell them, so rarely that it made an epoch in their lives, and they would say, for instance, 'That was very long ago, it happened when we had that rascal Aldoshka,' or, 'when we had grandfather's fur cap with the fox's tail stolen.' The Subotchevs still had such caps. Another distinguishing trait of the old world was, however, not noticeable in them: neither Fimushka nor Fomushka was very religious. Fomushka went so far as to profess some of Voltaire's views; while Fimushka had a mortal dread of ecclesiastical personages; they had, according to her experience, the evil eye. 'The priest comes in to call on me,' she used to say, 'and then I look round and the cream's turned sour!' They rarely went to church, and fasted in the Catholic fashion, that's to say, ate eggs, butter, and milk. This was known in the town, and of course did not improve their reputation. But their goodness carried everything before it; and though the queer Subotchevs were laughed at and regarded as lunatics and innocents, they were all the same, in fact, respected. Yes;

they were respected . . . but no one visited them. This, however, was no great affliction to them. They were never bored when they were together, and therefore they were never apart and desired no other company. Neither Fomushka nor Fimushka had once been ill; and if either of them ever contracted some slight ailment, then they both drank lime-flower water, rubbed warm oil on their stomachs, or dropped hot tallow on the soles of their feet, and it was very soon over. They always spent the day in the same way. They got up late, drank chocolate in the morning in tiny cups of the shape of mortars; 'tea,' they used to declare, 'came into fashion after our time.' They sat down opposite to one another, and either talked (and they always found something to talk about!) or read something out of *Agreeable Recreations*, *The Mirror of the World*, or *Aonides*, or looked at a little old album bound in red morocco with gold edges, which once belonged, as an inscription recorded, to one Mme. Barbe de Kabyline. How and when this album had got into their hands they did not know themselves. In it were several French and many Russian poems and prose extracts, after the fashion, for example, of the following short meditations on Cicero: 'In what disposition Cicero entered upon the office of quæstor, he

explains as follows: Invoking the gods to testify to the purity of his sentiments in every position with which he had hitherto been honoured, he deemed himself by the most sacred bonds bound to the worthy fulfilment thereof, and to that intent he, Cicero, not only suffered himself not the indulgence of the pleasures forbidden by law, but refrained even from those lighter distractions which are held to be indispensable by all.' Below stood the inscription: 'Composed in Siberia in hunger and cold.' A good specimen, too, was a poem entitled 'Tirsis,' where these lines were to be met:

'A settled peace is over all,
The dew's asparkle in the sun,
Nature it soothes, with freshness cool,
Giving new life to the day begun!
Tirsis alone, with soul dismayed,
Sorrows, pines, so lone and so sad.
His darling Aneta is far away,
And what can then make Tirsis glad?'

and the impromptu composition of a captain who had come on a visit in 1790, dated 'May 6th':

'Never shall I forget
Thee, lovely hamlet!
For ever shall I recall
How sweetly the time passed!
What kindness I received
In thy noble owner's hall!

Five memorable happy days,
In a circle worthy of all praise!
With old and young ladies, not a few,
And other int'resting people too.'

On the last page of the album, instead of verses there were recipes for remedies against stomach-ache, spasms, and worms. The Subotchevs dined at twelve o'clock punctually, and always upon old-fashioned dishes: curd fritters, sour cucumber soups, salt cabbage pickles, hasty pudding, jelly puddings, syrups, jugged poultry, with saffron and custards, made with honey. After dinner they took a nap for just one hour and no longer, waked up, again sat opposite one another, and drank cranberry syrup and sometimes an effervescent drink called 'forty winks,' which, however, almost all popped out of the bottle, and afforded the old people great amusement and Kalliopitch great annoyance; he had to wipe up 'all over the place,' and he kept up a long grumble at the butler and the cook, whom he regarded as responsible for the invention of this beverage . . . 'What sort of good is there in it? it only spoils the furniture!' Then the Subotchevs again read something, or laughed at the pranks of the dwarf Pufka, or sang duets of old-fashioned songs (their voices were exactly alike, high, feeble, rather quavering, and hoarse

—especially just after their nap,—but not without charm), or they played cards, always the same old games, cribbage, piquet, or even boston with double dummy! Then the samovar made its appearance; they drank tea in the evening. . . . This concession they did make to the spirit of the age, though they always thought it a weakness, and that the people were growing noticeably feebler through this 'Chinese herb.' As a rule, however, they refrained from criticising modern times or exalting the old days; they had never lived in any other way from their birth up; but that other people might live differently, better even, they readily admitted so long as they were not required to change their ways. At seven o'clock Kalliopitch served the supper, with the inevitable cold, sour hash; and at nine o'clock the high striped feather-beds had already taken into their soft embraces the plump little persons of Fomushka and Fimushka, and untroubled sleep was not slow in descending upon their eyelids; and everything was hushed in the old house; the lamp glowed, amid the fragrance of musk; the cricket chirped; and the kind-hearted, absurd, innocent old couple slept sound.

To these eccentrics, or, as Paklin expressed it, 'poll-parrots,' who were taking care of his sister, he now conducted his friends.

His sister was a clever girl, and not bad-looking. Her eyes were magnificent, but her unfortunate deformity had crushed her, deprived her of all self-confidence and joyousness, made her distrustful and even ill-tempered. And her name was very unfortunate, Snanduliya! Paklin had tried to make her change it to Sofya, but she clung obstinately to her queer name, saying that that was just what a hunchback ought to be called—Snanduliya. She was a good musician, and played the piano well: 'Thanks to my long fingers,' she observed with some bitterness; 'hunchbacks always have fingers like that.'

The visitors came upon Fomushka and Fimushka at the very minute when they had waked up from their after-dinner nap and were drinking cranberry water.

'We are stepping into the eighteenth century,' cried Paklin, directly they crossed the threshold of the Subotchevs' house.

And they were, in fact, confronted by the eighteenth century in the very hall, in the shape of low bluish screens covered with black cut-out silhouettes of powdered cavaliers and ladies. Silhouettes, introduced by Lavater, were much in vogue in Russia in the eighties of last century. The sudden appearance of so large a number of visitors—no less than four—pro-

duced quite a sensation in the secluded house. They heard a stampede of feet, both shod and naked; more than one woman's face was thrust out for an instant and then vanished again; some one was shut out, some one groaned, some one giggled, some one whispered convulsively, 'Get along with you, do!'

At last Kalliopitch made his appearance in his shabby jerkin, and, opening the door into the 'salon,' he cried in a loud voice:

'Your honour, Sila Samsonitch with some other gentlemen!'

The old people were far less fluttered than their servants. The irruption of four full-sized men in their drawing-room, comfortably large as it was, did indeed bewilder them a little, but Paklin promptly reassured them by presenting, with various odd phrases, Nezhdanov, Solomin, and Markelov to them in turn as good quiet fellows and not 'crown people.' Fomushka and Fimushka had a special dislike for 'crown'—that is, official—people.

Snanduliya, who appeared at her brother's summons, was far more agitated and ceremonious than the old Subotchevs. They asked their visitors, both together, and in exactly the same phrases, to sit down, and begged to know what they would take—tea, chocolate, or an effervescent beverage with jam? When they

heard that their guests wanted nothing, since they had not long before lunched at the merchant Golushkin's and would shortly dine there, then they did not press them, and, folding their little hands across their little persons in precisely the same manner, they entered upon conversation.

At first the conversation flagged rather, but soon it grew livelier. Paklin diverted the old people hugely with Gogol's well-known story of the mayor who succeeded in getting into a church when it was full, and of the pie that was equally successful in getting into the mayor; they laughed till the tears ran down their cheeks. They laughed, too, in exactly the same way, with sudden shrieks, ending in a cough, with their whole faces flushed and heated. Paklin had noticed that, as a rule, quotations from Gogol have a very powerful and, as it were, convulsive effect upon people like the Subotchevs, but, as he was not so much anxious to amuse them as to show them off to his friends, he changed his tactics, and managed so that the old people were soon quite at ease and animated. Fomushka brought out and showed the visitors his favourite carved wood snuff-box, on which it had once been possible to distinguish thirty-six figures in various attitudes; they had long ago been effaced, but Fomushka saw them,

saw them still, and could distinguish them and point them out. 'See,' he said, 'there's one looking out of window; do you see, he's put his head out . . .' and the spot to which he pointed with his chubby finger with its raised nail was just as smooth as all the rest of the snuff-box lid. Then he drew the attention of his guests to a picture hanging above his head, painted in oils; it represented a hunter in profile galloping full speed on a pale bay-coloured steed, also in profile, over a plain of snow. The hunter wore a tall white sheep-skin cap with a blue streamer, a tunic of camel's hair, with a velvet border and a belt of wrought gold; a glove embroidered in silk was tucked into the belt, and a dagger, mounted in silver and black, hung from it. In one hand the hunter, who was very youthful and plump in appearance, held a huge horn, decked with red tassels, and in the other the reins and whip. All the four legs of the horse were suspended in the air, and on each of them the artist had conscientiously portrayed a horse-shoe, and even put in the nails. 'And observe,' said Fomushka, pointing with the same chubby finger to four semi-circular marks in the white ground behind the horse's legs, 'the prints in the snow—even these he has put in!' Why it was that there were only four of these prints—

not one was to be seen further back—on that point Fomushka was silent.

'And you know that it is I,' he added after a brief pause, with a modest smile.

'What!' exclaimed Nezhdanov, 'did you hunt?'

'I did . . . but not for long. Once the horse threw me at full gallop, and I injured my "kurpy," so Fimushka was frightened . . . and so she wouldn't let me. I have given it up ever since.'

'What did you injure?' inquired Nezhdanov.

'The *kurpy*,' repeated Fomushka, dropping his voice.

His guests looked at one another. No one knew what sort of thing a *kurpy* might be; at least, Markelov knew that the shaggy tuft on a Cossack or Circassian cap is called a *kurpy*, but surely Fomushka could not have injured that! But to ask him exactly what he understood by the word was more than any one could make up his mind to do.

'Well, now, since you've shown off,' Fimushka observed suddenly, 'I will show off, too.'

Out of a diminutive 'bonheur du jour,' as they used to call the old-fashioned bureau on tiny crooked legs, with a convex lid which folded up into the back of the bureau, she took a water-colour miniature in an oval bronze

frame, representing a perfectly naked child of four years old, with a quiver on her shoulder and a blue ribbon round her breast, trying the points of the arrows with the end of her little finger. The child was very curly and smiling, and had a slight squint. Fimushka showed the miniature to her visitors.

'That was I!' she observed.

'You?'

'Yes, I. In my childhood. There was an artist, a Frenchman, who used to come and see my father—a splendid artist! And so he painted a picture of me for my father's birthday. And what a nice Frenchman he was! He came to see us afterwards, too. He would come in, scraping his foot as he bowed, and then giving it a little shake in the air, and would kiss your hand, and when he went away he would kiss his own finger and bow to right and to left, and before and behind! He was a delightful Frenchman!'

They praised his work; Paklin even professed to discern a certain likeness.

Then Fomushka began talking of the French of to-day, and expressed the opinion that they must all be very wicked!

'Why so, Foma Lavrentyevitch?'

'Why, only see what names they have now!'

'What, for instance?'

'Why, such as Nozhan-Tsent-Lorran (Nogent Saint Lorraine), a regular bandit's name!'

Fomushka inquired incidentally, 'Who was the sovereign now in Paris?'

They told him 'Napoleon,' and that seemed to surprise and pain him.

'Why so?'

'Why, he must be such an old man,' he began, and stopped, looking round him in confusion.

Fomushka knew very little French, and read Voltaire in a translation (in a secret box under the head of his bed he kept a manuscript translation of *Candide*), but he occasionally dropped expressions like 'That, my dear sir, is *fausse parquet*' (in the sense of 'suspicious,' 'untrue'), at which many people laughed till a learned Frenchman explained that it was an old parliamentary expression used in his country until the year 1789.

Seeing that the conversation had turned on France and the French, Fimushka screwed up her courage to inquire about one thing which was very much on her mind. She first thought of applying to Markelov, but he looked very ill-tempered; she might have asked Solomin . . . but no! she thought, 'he's a plain sort of person; he's sure not to know French.' So she addressed herself to Nezhdanov.

'There's something, my dear sir, I should

like to learn from you,' she began, 'excuse me! My cousin, Sila Samsonitch, you must know, makes fun of an old woman like me, and my old-fashioned ignorance.'

'How so?'

'Why, if any one wants to put the question, "What is it?" in the French dialect, ought he to say, "Ke-se-ke-se-ke-se-là?"'

'Yes.'

'And can he also say, "Ke-se-ke-se-là?"'

'Yes, he can.'

'And simply, "Ke-se-là?"'

'Yes, he could say that too.'

'And all that would be the same?'

'Yes.'

Fimushka pondered deeply, and threw up her hands.

'Well, Silushka,' she said at last, 'I was wrong and you were right. But these Frenchmen! Poor things!'

Paklin began begging the old people to sing them some little ballad.... They both laughed and wondered how such an idea could occur to him; they soon consented, however, but only on the condition that Snanduliya sat down to the harpsichord and accompanied them—she would know what. In one corner of the drawing-room there turned out to be a diminutive piano, which not one of them had noticed at the

beginning. Snanduliya sat down to this 'harpsichord,' struck a few chords. . . . Such toothless, acid, wizened, crazy notes Nezhdanov had never heard before in his life; but the old people began singing promptly:

'Is it to feel the smart,'

began Fomushka,

'That 's hid in love,
The gods gave us a heart
Attuned to love?'

'Was there a love-sick heart,'

responded Fimushka,

'In the world ever,
Quite free from woe and smart?

'Never! never!'

put in Fomushka.

'Never! never!'

repeated Fimushka.

'Pain is of love a part
Ever! ever!

they both say together.

'Ever! ever!

Fomushka warbled alone.

'Bravo!' cried Paklin; 'that 's the first verse, now the second.'

'Certainly,' answered Fomushka; 'only, Snanduliya Samsonovna, how about the shake? There ought to be a shake after my verse.'

'To be sure,' replied Snanduliya, 'you shall have your shake.'

Fomushka began again:

'Has ever lover loved
And known not grief and pain?
What lover has not sighed
And wept and sighed again?'

And then Fimushka:

'The heart is rocked in grief
As a ship floats on the main,
Why was it given, then?'

'For pain! for pain! for pain!'

cried Fomushka, and he waited to give Snanduliya time for the shake.

Snanduliya performed the shake.

'For pain! for pain! for pain!'

repeated Fomushka.

And then both together:

'Take, gods, my heart away,
Again! again! again!
Again! again! again!'

And the song wound up with another shake.

'Bravo! bravo!' they all shouted, with the

exception of Markelov, and they even clapped their hands.

'And do they feel,' thought Nezhdanov directly the applause ceased, 'they are performing like some sort of buffoons? Perhaps they don't, and perhaps they do feel it and think "Where's the harm? no one's the worse for it; we amuse others, in fact!" And if you look at it properly, they're right, a thousand times right!'

Under the influence of these reflections, he began suddenly paying them compliments, in acknowledgment of which they merely made a sort of slight courtesy, without leaving their chairs. . . . But at that instant, out of the adjoining room, probably a bedroom or maids'-room, where a great whispering and bustle had been audible a long while, appeared the dwarf, Pufka, escorted by the old nurse, Vassilyevna. Pufka proceeded to squeal and play antics, while the nurse one minute quieted her, and the next egged her on.

Markelov, who had long shown signs of impatience (as for Solomin, he simply wore a broader smile than usual) turned sharply upon Fomushka.

'I shouldn't have thought you,' he began in his abrupt fashion, 'with your enlightened intellect (you're a follower of Voltaire, aren't

you?) could be amused by what ought to be a subject for compassion—I mean deformity.' Then he remembered Paklin's sister, and could have bitten his tongue off; while Fomushka turned red, murmuring, 'Why—why, I didn't . . . she herself——'

And then Pufka fairly flew at Markelov.

'What put that idea into your head,' she squeaked in her lisping voice, 'to insult our masters? They protect a poor wretch like me, take me in, give me meat and drink, and you must grudge it me. You envy another's luck, I suppose. Where do you spring from, you black-faced, worthless wretch, with moustaches like a beetle's?' Here Pufka showed with her thick, short finger what his moustaches were like. Vassilyevna's toothless gums were shaking with laughter, and her mirth was echoed in the next room.

'Of course I can't presume to judge you, Markelov addressed Fomushka; 'to protect the poor and the crippled is a good action. But allow me to observe, to live in luxury, wallowing in ease and plenty, even without injuring others, but not to lift a finger to aid your fellow-creatures, doesn't imply much virtue; I, for one, to tell the truth, attach no value to that sort of goodness!'

Here Pufka gave a deafening howl she had

not understood a word of all Markelov said; but the 'black-browed fellow' was scolding . . . how dared he! Vassilyevna, too, muttered something indistinct, while Fomushka folded his little hands across his breast, and turning towards his wife, 'Fimushka, my darling,' he said, all but sobbing, 'do you hear what the gentleman says? You and I are sinners, miscreants, Pharisees . . . we're wallowing in luxury, oh! oh! . . . we ought to be turned into the streets . . . and have a broom put in our hands to work for our living. Oh, ho! ho!' Hearing these mournful words, Pufka howled louder than ever. Fimushka's eyes puckered up, the corners of her mouth dropped, she was just drawing in a deep breath so as to give full vent to her emotions.

There's no knowing how it would have ended if Paklin had not intervened.

'What's the meaning of this? upon my word,' he began with a wave of the hand and a loud laugh, 'I wonder you're not ashamed of yourselves. Mr. Markelov meant to make a little joke, but as he has such a very solemn face, it sounded rather alarming, and you were taken in by it! That's enough! Evfimiya Pavlovna, there's a dear, we've got to go in a minute, so, do you know what? you must tell all our fortunes before parting . .

you're a great hand at that. Sister! get the cards!'

Fimushka glanced at her husband, and he was sitting quiet, completely reassured; she, too, was reassured.

'The cards,' she said; 'but I've quite forgotten, my dear sir, it's long since I had them in my hand.'

But of her own accord she took out of Snanduliya's hands a pack of aged, queer ombre cards.

'Whose fortune shall I tell?'

'Oh, every one's,' said Paklin; while to himself he said, 'What a mobile old thing! you can turn her any way you like . . . she's a perfect darling! Every one's, granny, every one's,' he went on aloud; 'tell us our fate, our character, our future . . . tell us everything!'

Fimushka began shuffling the cards, but suddenly she threw down the whole pack.

'I don't need to use the cards!' she cried; 'I know the character of each of you without that. And as the character is, so is the fate. He, now' (she pointed to Solomin) 'is a cool man, constant; he, now' (she shook her finger at Markelov) 'is a hot, dangerous man . . .' (Pufka put out her tongue at him); 'as for you' (she looked at Paklin), 'there's no need to tell you; you know yourself—a weathercock! As for

this gentleman' (she indicated Nezhdanov, and hesitated).

'What is it?' he said; 'tell me, please; what sort of man am I?'

'What sort of man are you? . . .' said Fimushka slowly, 'you 're to be pitied—that 's all.'

Nezhdanov shuddered.

'To be pitied? why so?'

'Oh! I pity you—that 's all.'

'But why?'

'Oh, for reasons! My eye tells me so. Do you think I 'm a fool? Oh, I 'm cleverer than you, for all your red hair. . . . I pity you . . . that 's your fortune!'

All were silent . . . they looked at one another, and were still silent.

'Well, good-bye, dear friends,' Paklin cried, 'we 've stayed too long and tired you, I 'm afraid. It 's time these gentlemen were off . . . and I 'll see them on their way. Good-bye; thanks for your kind reception.'

'Good-bye, good-bye, come again, don't stand on ceremony,' Fomushka and Fimushka cried with one voice. . . . Then Fomushka struck up suddenly like a refrain:

'Many, many years of life.'

'Many, many years,' Kalliopitch chimed in quite unexpectedly in the bass, as he opened the door to the young men.

And all four of them suddenly emerged into the street before the podgy little house ; while at the window they heard Pufka's squeaky voice : 'Fools . . .' she shouted, 'fools ! . . .'

Paklin laughed aloud ; but no one responded. Markelov scanned each in turn as though he expected to hear some word of indignation. . . .

Solomin alone smiled his ordinary smile.

XX

WELL, now,' Paklin was the first to begin, 'we have been in the eighteenth century; now lead the way full trot to the twentieth. . . . Golushkin's such an advanced man that it wouldn't do to reckon him in the nineteenth.'

'Why, do you know him?' inquired Nezhdanov.

'The earth is full of his glory; and I said, "lead the way," because I meant to come with you.'

'How's that? why, you don't know him, do you?'

'Get along! Did you know my poll-parrots?'

'But you introduced us!'

'Well, and do you introduce me. You can have no secrets from me, and Golushkin's an open heart. You'll see he'll be delighted to see some one new. And we don't stand on ceremony here in S——!'

'Yes,' muttered Markelov, 'people seem unceremonious here certainly.'

Paklin shook his head.

'That 's, perhaps, meant for me. . . . So be it! I 've deserved the reproach. But I say, my new acquaintance, defer for a time the gloomy reflections your bilious temperament inspires in you! And most of all——'

'And you, sir, my new acquaintance,' Markelov interrupted emphatically, 'let me tell you . . . by way of a word of warning, I never have the faintest taste for joking at any time, and especially not to-day! And what do you know about my temperament? It strikes me that we 've not long—that it 's the first time we 've set eyes on each other.'

'There, there, don't be cross, and don't swear. I 'll believe you without that,' said Paklin, and turning to Solomin: 'Oh, you,' he exclaimed, 'you whom the keen-sighted Fimushka herself called a cool man—and there certainly is something refreshing about you—say, had I the slightest intention of doing anything unpleasant to any one, or of joking unseasonably? I only suggested going with you to Golushkin; and besides, I 'm an inoffensive creature. It 's not my fault that Mr. Markelov has a bilious complexion.'

Solomin shrugged up first one shoulder, then the other; it was a habit of his when he could not make up his mind at once what to answer.

'There's no mistake,' he said at last, 'you couldn't give offence to any one, Mr. Paklin, and you don't want to; and why shouldn't you go to Mr. Golushkin's? We shall, I should fancy, spend our time just as pleasantly there as at your cousin's, and just as profitably.'

Paklin shook his finger at him.

'Oh! I see there's malice in you too! But you're going to Golushkin's yourself, aren't you?'

'To be sure I'm going. To-day's a day lost, any way.'

'Well then, *en avant, marchons*, to the twentieth century! to the twentieth century! Nezhdanov, you're an advanced man, lead the way!'

'All right, come along; only, don't repeat the same jokes too often, for fear of our thinking you're running out of your stock.'

'There'll always be plenty at your service,' retorted Paklin gaily, and he hurried, advancing, as he said, not by leaps and bounds, but by limps and bounds.

'An amusing chap, very,' Solomin remarked as he walked behind him arm-in-arm with Nezhdanov; 'if—which God forbid—they send us all to Siberia, there'll be some one to amuse us!'

Markelov walked in silence behind the rest.

Meanwhile in the house of the merchant

host talked—and Paklin; Paklin especially. Nezhdanov was inwardly fretting; Markelov was angry and indignant, just as indignant, though in a different way, as at the Subotchevs; Solomin was looking on, observant.

Paklin was enjoying himself! With his smart speeches he greatly delighted Golushkin, who had not the faintest suspicion that the 'little lame chap' kept whispering to Nezhdanov, who was sitting beside him, the cruellest remarks at his, Golushkin's, expense! He positively imagined that he was something of a simpleton, who might be patronised . . . and that was partly why he liked him. Had Paklin been sitting next him, he would have poked him in the ribs with his finger or slapped him on the shoulder; as it was, he winked at him across the table and nodded his head in his direction . . . but between him and Nezhdanov was seated first Markelov, like a storm-cloud, and then Solomin. However, Golushkin laughed convulsively at every word Paklin uttered, and even laughed on trust in advance, slapping himself on the stomach, and showing his bluish gums. Paklin soon saw what was required of him, and began abusing everything (it was a congenial task for him)—everything and everybody; conservatives, liberals, officials, barristers, judges, landowners, district

councils, local assemblies, Moscow and Petersburg!

'Yes, yes, yes, yes,' put in Golushkin; 'to be sure, to be sure! Our mayor here, for instance, is a perfect ass! A hopeless noodle! I tell him one thing and another . . . but he doesn't understand a word; he's just such another as our governor!'

'Is your governor a fool?' inquired Paklin.

'I tell you he's an ass!'

'Have you ever noticed, does he grunt or snuffle?'

'What?' asked Golushkin in some bewilderment.

'Why, don't you know? In Russia our great civilians grunt; and our great army men talk through their noses; and it's only the very highest dignitaries who both grunt and snuffle at once.'

Golushkin roared with laughter till the tears ran down.

'Yes, yes,' he stuttered, 'he snuffles. . . . . He's an army man!'

'Ugh, you booby!' Paklin was thinking to himself.

'Everything's rotten with us, go where you will,' bawled Golushkin, a little later. 'Everything's rotten, everything!'

'Most honoured Kapiton Andreitch,' Paklin

observed sympathetically—(he had just been whispering to Nezhdanov, 'What makes him keep moving his arms about, as if his coat were too tight in the armholes?')—'Most honoured Kapiton Andreitch, trust me, half-measures are no use now!'

'Half-measures!' screamed Golushkin, suddenly ceasing to laugh, and assuming a ferocious expression, 'there's only one thing now: to tear it all up from the roots! Vasya, drink, you dirty dog you, drink!'

'And so I am drinking, Kapiton Andreitch,' responded the clerk, emptying his glass down his throat.

Golushkin, too, tossed off a glassful.

'How is it he doesn't burst?' Paklin whispered to Nezhdanov.

'It's practice does it!' rejoined Nezhdanov.

But the clerk was not the only one who drank. By degrees the wine affected them all. Nezhdanov, Markelov, even Solomin, gradually took part in the conversation.

At first in a sort of disdain, in a sort of vexation with himself for not keeping up his character, for doing nothing, Nezhdanov began to maintain that the time had come to cease to play with mere words, the time had come to 'act,'—he even alluded to the 'bed-rock having been reached!' And then,

without noticing that he was contradicting himself, he began to ask them to point out what real existing elements they could rely on—to declare that he couldn't see any. No sympathy in society, no understanding in the people.

He got no answer, of course; not because there was no answer to be given, but that every one was by now talking on his own account. Markelov kept up a monotonous, insistent drone with his dull, angry voice ('for all the world as if he were chopping cabbage,' remarked Paklin). Precisely what he was talking of, was not quite clear; the word 'artillery' could be distinguished in a momentary lull . . . he was probably referring to the defects he had discovered in its organisation. Germans and adjutants seemed also to be coming in for their share. Even Solomin observed that there were two ways of waiting: waiting and doing nothing, and waiting while pushing things forward.

'Progressives are no good to us,' said Markelov gloomily.

'Progressives have hitherto worked from above,' observed Solomin; 'we are going to try working from below.'

'No use, go to the devil, no use in it!' Golushkin cut in furiously; 'we must act at once, at once!'

In fact, you want to jump out of window?'

I'll jump out!' clamoured Golushkin. 'I will! and so'll Vasya! If I tell him, he'll jump out! Eh, Vasya? You'd jump, wouldn't you?'

The clerk drank off a glass of champagne.

'Where you lead, Kapiton Andreitch, there I follow. I shouldn't dare think twice about it.'

'You'd better not! I'd twist you into a ram's horn.'

Before long there followed what in the language of drunkards is known as a 'regular Babel.' A mighty clamour and uproar arose.

Like the first flakes of snow, swiftly whirling, crossing and recrossing in the still mild air of autumn, words began flying, tumbling, jostling against one another in the heated atmosphere of Golushkin's dining-room—words of all sorts—progress, government, literature; the taxation question, the church question, the woman question, the law-court question; classicism, realism, nihilism, communism; international, clerical, liberal, capital; administration, organisation, association, and even crystallisation! It was just this uproar which seemed to rouse Golushkin to enthusiasm; the real gist of the matter seemed to consist in this, for him. . . .

He was triumphant! 'Here we are! Out of the way or I'll kill you! . . . Kapiton Golushkin's coming!' The clerk Vasya at last reached such a point of tipsiness, that he began snorting and talking to his plate, and suddenly shouted like one possessed: 'What the devil's the meaning of a *pro*gymnasium?'

Golushkin all at once got up, and throwing back his crimson face, in which an expression of coarse brutality and swagger was curiously mingled with the expression of another feeling, like a secret misgiving, even trepidation, he bawled, 'I will sacrifice another thousand! Vasya, out with it!' to which Vasya responded in an undertone, 'He's going it!'

Paklin, pale and perspiring (for the last quarter of an hour he had vied with the clerk in drinking), Paklin, jumping up from his place, and lifting both hands high above his head, cried brokenly, 'Sacrifice! he said, sacrifice! Oh, degradation of that sacred word! Sacrifice! No one dares to rise to thee, no one has the strength to fulfil the duties thou enjoinest, at least no one of us here present—and this lout, this vile money-bag, gloats over his swollen gains, scatters a handful of roubles, and shouts of sacrifice! And asks for gratitude; expects a wreath of laurel—the mean scoundrel!' Golushkin either did not hear, or did not under-

stand what Paklin said, or possibly took his words for a joke, for he vociferated once more, 'Yes! a thousand roubles! Kapiton Andreitch's word is sacred!' He suddenly thrust his hand into his side-pocket. 'Here it is, here's the cash! There, pocket it; and remember Kapiton!' As soon as he reached a certain pitch of excitement, he used to talk of himself in the third person, like a little child. Nezhdanov picked up the notes flung on the wine-stained cloth. Since there was nothing to stay for after this, and it was now late, they all got up, took their caps, and went away.

In the open air they all felt giddy, especially Paklin.

'Well? where are we going now?' he managed to articulate with some difficulty.

'I don't know where you're going,' answered Solomin; 'I'm going home.'

'To your factory?'

'Yes.'

'Now, in the middle of the night, on foot?'

'What of it? there are neither wolves nor brigands here, and I'm quite well and able to walk. It's cooler walking at night.'

'But, I say, it's three miles!'

'Well, what if it were four? Good-bye, my friends!'

Solomin buttoned up his coat, pulled his

cap over his forehead, lighted a cigar, and set off with long strides up the street.

'And where are you going?' said Paklin, turning to Nezhdanov.

'I'm going to his place.' He indicated Markelov, who was standing stock-still, his arms folded across his breast. 'We have horses here and a carriage.'

'Oh, that's capital . . . and I, my dear boy, am going to the oasis, to Fomushka and Fimushka. And do you know what I would say to you, my dear boy? There's madness there and madness here . . . only that madness, the eighteenth century madness, is closer to the heart of Russia than the twentieth century. Good-bye, gentlemen; I'm drunk, don't be angry with me. Just let me say one thing! There's not a kinder and a better woman on earth than my sister, Snanduliya; and you see what she is—a hunchback, and her name's Snanduliya! That's how it always is in this world! Though it's quite right that should be her name. Do you know who Saint Snanduliya was? A virtuous woman, who visited the prisons and healed the wounds of the prisoners and the sick. Well, good-bye! good-bye, Alexey—man to be pitied! And you call yourself an officer . . . ugh! misanthrope! good-bye!'

He trailed away, limping and swaying from side to side, towards the oasis, while Markelov and Nezhdanov sought out the posting station where they had left their coach, ordered the horses to be put to, and half an hour later they were driving along the highroad.

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